



Thursday, August 31, 2017

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Work designed to boost safety at busy junction

END OF ROAD FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Report by Alex Ross

WORK to improve safety and reduce congestion at a busy junction in Halesowen will begin its final stage next year.

The £3 million scheme to overhaul the junction at Dudley Road and Coombs Road in Halesowen began in January and it was originally hoped it would be completed this year.

Work to widen the pedestrian islands and increase lanes has taken place on entrances from Dudley Road, Furnace Hill and Halesowen Road.

Workers will now take place in 2018 to complete the scheme by focusing on the Coombs Road entrance. It will result in the extension of lanes from two to three with a new right-hand lane to reduce congestion.

Halesowen North ward Councillor Hilary Bills said: "Councillors called for this work to be done to improve the safety of junction and reduce congestion."

"It is in an area where there is a lot of housing but people have stopped using the junction to cross as pedestrians."

Route

"With the increased size in pedestrian islands I hope it provides a safer route for families to cross the road."

Drivers are regularly stuck in delays on Coombs Road during rush hour as traffic heading for the M5 backs up from Manor Way.

Nearly 7,000 people work on the Coombs Wood Business Park and vehicles leaving the site only adds to the delays.

Almost £3 million had been awarded to Dudley Council from the Black Country Executive Committee's Local Growth Fund for the scheme.

Meanwhile, major road disruption is forecast nearby as the M5 roadworks misery spreads to nearby roads in Sandwell.

A series of closures are planned as part of the long-running motorway works. Birmingham Road, Park Lane and Stone Street, in Oldbury, as well as Spon Lane South, in West Bromwich, will be closed for periods. Sandwell Council said the closures would be mostly overnight and short-term.

Highways England has come under fire over restrictions in place on the motorway, which have seen traffic reduced to a crawl.

WALL DESIGN A NOD TO CRADLEY HEATH HERITAGE



Chain reaction – Robert Mooney at the wall in Stacey Close, Old Hill, with its traditional Black Country chain pattern now in place

A 12ft wall that collapsed three years ago has finally been rebuilt with an eye-catching design paying tribute to Cradley Heath's chain-making history.

The eyesore wall fell into Stacey Close, in Cradley Heath, in June 2014 and has cost Sandwell Council bosses more than £200,000 to rebuild.

Resident Robert Mooney, from Clyde Street, which the wall backs onto, has campaigned for it to be rebuilt since the collapse.

He said: "I am delighted that at long last it is finally complete. I asked if they could put a

chain design in honour of the chain-makers workshop in my back garden – so it was a nod to that too."

"Sutton Coldfield Construction who did the building were really nice and did a fantastic job."

Mess

"It is great to be able to go outside and see it look how it does without it being in the mess it was before."

"I never thought I would see the day when it would look like this – it has been a battle."

The remains of the collapsed wall had orange barriers in place around it after it fell down, but despite several visits from council officers up until 2016 no work was carried out to restore it.

The derelict state led to further problems as the alleyway was blighted by bags of rubbish and broken furniture, alongside the rubble.

However, earlier this year council bosses said they were looking to appoint a contractor to undertake the 'major structural works'.

Repair work to rear gardens was also completed, including slabs and fences.

POLICE

Cabbie is killed by hit-and-run driver

A TAXI driver was killed in a hit-and-run incident in Edgbaston during the early hours of Tuesday.

The 47-year-old man was standing next to his car when he was struck on City Road at 1.50am. The car that hit him failed to stop at the scene.

Police have now launched an appeal for information from anyone who saw the collision.

Sergeant Alan Hands, from West Midlands Police's Collision Investigation Unit, said: "I would urge anyone who saw what happened on City Road or has any information to urgently call my team on 101.

"The family of the man are being supported by specialist officers."

STABBING

Tougher searches after death at club

A SENIOR councillor says he hopes tougher security measures at a Stourbridge nightclub where a man died after being stabbed will prevent similar incidents from happening again.

Councillor Nicolas Barlow has welcomed the use of metal detection wands to search customers at Chicago's, which has been allowed to reopen after the death of Ryan Passey.

● Searches at nightclub – page 3

HEALTH

Ambulance TV show 'great advert'

A HARD-HITTING documentary series about the life-saving actions of West Midlands Ambulance Service has been described as a 'great advert' by chiefs.

Ambulance, screened by the BBC on Thursdays, provides a 'behind-the-sirens insight' through the eyes of paramedics in the Black Country and Staffordshire.

● Real life paramedic drama – page 8

INSIDE

CYCLE LEGEND BACKS EVENT



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Jake Pearson and his gorilla

A GRANDFATHER from Dudley has been left devastated after thieves targeted his home, stealing £300 raised for a cancer charity.

Jake Pearson had raised the money in memory of his wife, who died last year after a five-year battle with breast cancer.

The money had been raised for Cancer Research UK through public donations to a charity box placed outside his Pensnett Road home, where passers-by can leave a donation if they want to take a selfie snap with quirky models that

former lorry driver Mr Pearson keeps on his drive.

The thieves also stole his late wife's earrings and a credit card.

Mr Pearson, 75, said: "It's upsetting. I got up and the windows were open and the door was unlocked, the photograph of my granddaughter near the fireplace was on the floor. The money has gone and the earrings have gone – the money had gone out the cupboard, all £300. I must have disturbed them when I came down the stairs and put the lights on because that's all they took."

Mr Pearson's fundraising campaign has been based on the generosity of those who have donated in appreciation of his quirky sense of humour, having large models of a gorilla and a dinosaur outside his home.

He added that despite the theft last Tuesday he still had £200 to give to charity.

Mr Pearson, who has four grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren, said: "I've got two gorillas, a dinosaur, a tipper truck and I'm looking for a woolly mammoth, all for cancer research."

Taskforce will combat off-road bike menace

AN emergency service taskforce has been set up to tackle the menace of off-road bikers in the Black Country.

West Midlands Police has joined forces with Sandwell Council and West Midlands Fire Service to stamp out disruptive behaviour in parks and open space across the borough.

The partnership was unveiled at Warrens Hall Park in Dudley where it was revealed that the taskforce will use Fire Brigade Response Vehicles to catch nuisance off-road bikers, fly-tippers and people starting grass fires.

The 4x4s will allow members of the team to gain access to areas that standard vehicles cannot reach.

Haden Cross fire watch commander Jason Jew said: "When our crews come out and attack these issues, such as grass and fly-tipping fires, we're also trying to address instances of anti-social behaviour involving off-road motorcycles.

Threat

"Obviously, off-road motorcycles pose a threat to my crews that are attending these fires and tackling these fires but also any people that are actually using the parks – dog walkers and cyclists. It's an emerging risk not only in Warrens Hall Park, we've got issues in Wednesbury, which is Friar Park, we've got issues in Tipton."

The partnership aims to ease the workload of West Midlands Police, helping the force to identify those causing problems and to impound off-road scramblers.

The pilot scheme will run until October. If it is successful, plans have been made for it to be rolled out every year.

Jason Brunt, sales manager at Street-bike in Halesowen, was at the launch of the initiative. He said: "Anybody who is a proper motorcyclist will be taking off-road bikes to proper off-road centres around the Midlands and there's plenty of them within easy reach, so there's no need to come to places like this."

Tommy's day to remember at Baggies



Tommy meets Adrian Chiles and Frank Skinner during his big day out at The Hawthorns on Sunday

YOUNG Tommy Brown had a day to remember at The Hawthorns as he met Premier League footballers and TV celebrities.

The five-year-old was the centre of attention ahead of West Bromwich Albion's 1-1 draw with Stoke City at the weekend, proud to be Fans' Champion for a second time.

At just seven months old Tommy lost both his legs and his right hand following a bout of meningitis.

Outside the ground on Sunday fans were asked to donate to help

provide him with new prosthetics. Inside The Hawthorns, Tommy was smiling from ear to ear, particularly as he got to meet his favourite player James Morrison.

James McClean also took the time to pose for pictures with the youngster who won the hearts of Albion fans after first appearing as Fans' Champion earlier this year.

Mascots Baggie Bird and Albi were reacquainted with Tommy and there was even time for a chat with celebrity Albion fans, come-

dian Frank Skinner and TV presenter Adrian Chiles.

Sunday's fundraising was organised by season-ticket holder Debbie Green. She said: "Tommy was just constantly smiling all day and was absolutely loving it."

The youngster's parents, Julie Tuckley and Dean Brown, have been fundraising ever since tragedy struck and now the £20,000 target has been hit he will be getting prosthetic legs.

Club looking at 'abusive' comment to player

HALESOWEN Town has confirmed it is investigating claims of abusive comments made towards an opposition player at The Grove.

The club has apologised for alleged abuse aimed at James Beresford, who featured in Sutton Coldfield Town's 2-0 victory at the Old Hawne Lane ground.

Beresford was purportedly subjected to the comments during Monday's game after picking up an injury following a late tackle from Halesowen captain Daniel Bragoli, who received a red card.

Club president Colin Brookes, who is the father of chairman Karen Brookes, said: "Things like this happen on occasion and hopefully the supporter will see the error of his ways. If we can identify who it was, we would like to speak to the person responsible."

A club statement, posted on Tuesday, read: "The club would like to apologise to James and everyone at Sutton Coldfield Town and will be investigating this matter further, taking relevant action where necessary."

Sutton Coldfield Town's official Twitter account responded to the statement, posting: "Emotions do occasionally get the better of some supporters."

"Your player personally apologised to @Bezza_95 which was accepted and appreciated."

Gun threat at bookmaker's

POLICE are hunting two robbers who threatened staff at a bookmakers in Dudley with a gun.

The crooks, who were wearing boiler suits and masks, burst into Betfred in Saltwells Road, Netherton, and got away with cash.

West Midlands Police has now issued a plea for information from anyone who was in the area at the time.

The incident happened just after 9pm on Monday, August 21.

One of the men was wearing a red baseball cap and the pair are believed to have left the bookies in a pale blue car.

Anyone with information should call DC Sean Lowe, of West Midlands Police, on 101, using extension number 815 6092, quoting 20DY/178372C/17.

Kasabian concert at Arena venue

LEICESTER rockers Kasabian have announced a 12-date tour including a gig at Birmingham Arena on December 8. Tickets go on sale for the Fire outfit's Birmingham gig today (Thursday) from 9.30am, at www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 3388222.

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Quarrel over free parking exposes Tory UKIP divide

THE introduction of free parking at council-run car parks across Dudley borough has sparked a row.

UKIP members have been irritated by the Conservative-controlled council's move to bring in an hour's free parking, insisting it will make little difference and pushing for two hours of free parking instead, as per a previous trial period.

UKIP support allowed the Tories to take control of Dudley Council in May but cracks in the alliance have begun to show as UKIP group leader Councillor Paul Brothwood is irritated that they were not consulted on the move.

No single party has a majority at Dudley Council but UKIP lent its support to the Tories in May to put Conservative group boss Patrick Harley in charge as council leader. It is not formal coalition.

Councillor Brothwood said: "Without consulting us they reduced it to two hours. It is certainly not good enough. The trial for two hours was very successful and I spoke to traders who had seen an increase in footfall."

Councillor Harley said the change to one hour free parking would make up to £500,000 available to tidy up the borough. He did not rule out bringing in two hours free parking in the future. He added: "One hour will be fine for the majority of shoppers."

The free hour will be introduced on October 1.

Burglars claimed they were police

TWO burglars broke into an elderly Dudley woman's home while she was sleeping and then pretended to be police.

The 89-year-old was disturbed by the men after they forced open the back door of her home in the Russells Hall area.

When challenged the intruders told her that they were police officers but began searching her bedroom. The pair fled empty-handed.

The woman was not physically injured but suffered a panic attack and was very shaken by the experience, according to West Midlands Police.

Officers are now appealing for information following the burglary at around 12.40pm on August 2. Three white men made off in a grey Audi A3.

Vaping store move

A VAPING store has relocated to a larger store in Brierley Hill. Electro Mist has moved from the Merry Hill Centre to the Moor Centre, where it has taken over the former Boots.

Reports of shots as man hit by vehicle



Police blocked Himley Road in Dudley

A MAN was seriously injured after being hit by a car amid reports of gunfire as violence flared in a Dudley street.

Armed police descended on Himley Road after the 36-year-old suffered serious leg injuries and shots were heard.

Neighbours told of a large group of men armed with baseball bats, machetes and golf clubs seen getting out of cars and vans at around 7.30pm on Thursday. The gunshots were heard at around 10pm as a car sped away from the scene.

Around 15 men then gathered near a roundabout that joins with Wolverhampton Street as police arrived.

The victim was taken to hospital with serious leg injuries but did not suffer gunshot wounds and is believed to have been the only person hurt.

Himley Road was closed off for forensic teams to comb the area for clues. Officers were also out to reassure worried residents.

Chief Inspector Sean Phillips, incident manager for West Midlands Police, said: "Gun crime is a high priority for us and we will be working

round the clock to identify who is responsible.

"We urge anyone who was in the vicinity, and saw what happened, to contact us as soon as possible with any information."

Ex-soldier Mark Rigg, aged 52, who lives nearby, said: "Seven vehicles – cars and vans – pulled up and some men jumped out with machetes, baseball bats and golf clubs, and went up to the house. A guy in the car wearing a mask started papping his horn and they all jumped back into the cars. He drove off with the doors still open."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Car ends up on roof in M5 crash

FIVE people were treated by medics after a three-car smash which saw one vehicle end up on its roof on the M5.

The crash happened just before 1pm on Saturday on the M5 north between junctions three and two in the Woodgate Valley area, close to the Halesowen junction.

One person was taken to Sandwell hospital following the crash and two people suffered minor injuries.

Two fire crews attended the scene.

A spokesman from West Midlands Fire said: "We were called at 12.51 to a three motor vehicle collision on the M5 north between junctions three and two. One vehicle ended up on its roof."

Shopping centre deal is refinanced

THE owner of intu Merry Hill shopping centre has completed a £488 million refinancing deal.

Intu Properties has refinanced a loan agreement taken out to enable its full ownership of the shopping centre, where it is planning a new cinema and restaurants. Intu originally bought a 50 per cent stake in Merry Hill, the seventh largest UK shopping centre, in March 2014 for £408m from Westfield. Queensland Investment Corporation retained the other half until intu agreed to acquire the remaining 50 per cent last year in a £410m deal.

Police tell nightclub to carry out more searches

A NIGHTCLUB in Stourbridge that was the scene of a fatal stabbing is being allowed to open again by licensing bosses. This comes after police described the search policy at Chicago's, in the town centre, as 'inadequate' when Ryan Passey, 24, was stabbed.

Detectives said they had seen no evidence from CCTV of anyone being searched entering the club on the night that Mr Passey was stabbed but club bosses insist customers were searched out of view of the cameras.

Popular amateur footballer Mr Passey, from Quarry Bank, died as a result of the injuries he received during the incident inside the club during the early hours of Sunday, August 6.

The nightclub has been told it can re-open but ordered to tighten security and will now have to use metal detection wands to search customers. Police they were not satisfied with the previous policy of one in six people being searched.

Aunt

Mr Passey's aunt Sue Passey told councillors: "I don't believe they were doing any checks. I also believe Chicago's was negligent in its responsibility, not only to keep Ryan safe but to keep the public safe." Ms Passey handed a petition signed by 4,000 people calling for the High Street club to be closed.

Charles Streeten, on behalf of West Midlands Police, said: "The procedures in place were inadequate. The police have proposed a series of stringent conditions designed to prevent anything like this happening again. Police viewed two hours of CCTV and didn't see anyone being searched."

Dudley Council's licensing committee approved several conditions that the club must follow, including fire exit alarms to ensure nobody sneaks in.

James Rankin, on behalf of Deltic, which owns Chicago's, said: "I accept with the benefit of hindsight the procedures in place that night were inappropriate. But it was appropriate at the time given there was no history of offences."

Kobe Murray, 19, of The Broadway, Dudley, has been charged with murder and remanded in custody to appear at Birmingham Crown Court on Tuesday.



Police at the scene the day after 24-year-old Ryan Passey was attacked at Chicago's night club



Popular footballer Ryan Passey was stabbed



Hundreds attended a vigil to remember Ryan

Housing estate speeding concern

AN 'urgent review' into crashes on a housing estate in the Black Country has been called for due to concerns over speeding motorists and pedestrian safety.

Campaigners say that the Caledonia estate in Brierley Hill has seen increased crashes and dangerous driving in recent months.

A petition launched by the Caledonia Residents' Association is rapidly gaining signatures after more than 100 motorists were caught speeding in just one hour on the estate during a crackdown.

Six teenagers arrested after house break-in

SIX teenagers have been arrested after a break-in at a house.

The six arrested, all for burglary, were an 18-year-old woman from Brierley Hill, three 16-year-old boys from Dudley, a 15-year-old boy from Halesowen and 17-year-old boy from Stourbridge for burglary and possession of cannabis.

The arrests followed reports of a break-in at a house on Dunsley Road in Kinver.

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Philippines failed health staff recruitment trip cost £19k

THE trust which runs Russells Hall hospital spent £19,000 on a trip to the Philippines, which saw them recruit just three new staff.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust conducted 115 candidate interviews on the trip in April last year but almost all of them proved unsuitable. A total of 108 candidates were unsuccessful because they failed to pass an English language test.

Dudley UKIP councillor Paul Brothwood said: "I think it's a sad reflection that they need to travel all the way to the Philippines to hire staff when we have perfectly good students here in Britain. It's a total waste of money but sadly it doesn't surprise me, the public financial sector is out of control."

But the trust now says its recruitment focus would now remain closer to home, following the trip to the Far East which they described as 'not successful'.

Russells Hall Hospital has taken on 60 nurses and midwives in recent weeks and held another recruitment event last week that led to ten more staff being hired.

Dudley Council health boss Rachel Harris, said that the Government's decision to cancel bursaries for nurse training had hit the homegrown supply of staff.

Result

"The issues that the trust, along with other NHS organisations, are facing is the direct result of the current lack of our own nurses in the system. This is just the start of what will be an increasing pressure."

Siobhan Jordan, interim chief nurse at The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "The £19,000 covered flights and accommodation at competitive rates for the recruitment team."

She added: "We are now focusing on a sustainable recruitment plan that aims to attract a talented workforce from our own local population and the West Midlands."

DOGS of all breeds and sizes will be in the spotlight during an event at a beauty spot in the Black Country.

All About Dogs is taking place at Warley Woods near Smethwick on Sunday, September 10.

The event will include a dog show and a demonstration by Guide Dogs at The Pavilion, Lightwoods Hill.

There will also be the chance to browse a range of canine-themed stalls at the event, which will run from 11am until 4pm.

For more information see the website www.warleywoods.org.uk or call 0121 420 1061.

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Group claim childcare crisis in borough

MORE than 700 parents in Dudley borough are unable to find a carer for their children.

A report has found that just 318 childcare providers were found to be actively searching for work in Dudley in comparison to more than 1,000 parents requiring their services.

However, council bosses in the borough have disputed the findings and challenged them after the apparent crisis was revealed by Childcare.co.uk, which compiled its internal data to compare the number of parents and child carers.

Councillor Anne Millward, cabinet member for children's services at Dudley Council, said: "I must admit I have never, ever had any calls from anybody, had an issue with anyone coming to me saying they can't find child care."

"In the last few years we have had a massive increase in private nurseries, in fact, it's one of the big growth areas, so I'm rather surprised that's what they said. I would challenge those figures, we have got some excellent Ofsted ratings and as I say I have never had anybody come to me with a child care issue in the borough."

The company also claimed that Dudley is one of the most in-demand places in the UK for childcare providers.

Book celebration is Hobbit forming

AN Unexpected Birthday celebration is being held to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the publication of JRR Tolkien's book The Hobbit.

Tickets are £25 for the event on September 9 at 7pm featuring music, hog roast and plenty of ale at Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, Birmingham, as part of the Middle Earth Festival.

Freemasons open doors to public



Stourbridge Freemasons secretary Ken Hingley and chairman Alan Payne in their lodge room at the hotel

what happens at their meetings. The opening will celebrate 300 years since the Premier Grand Lodge of England was founded.

Stourbridge branch, which has been around since the 1800s, is one of the oldest lodges in the country.

Members will be revealing some of its artefacts and its work, includ-

ing much fundraising done to benefit charities.

Secretary of the Stourbridge group Ken Hingley, 73, explained what visitors could experience during the open day. He said: "They can expect to see a lodge room as it's set up and be able to talk to Freemasons. It's not a secret society."

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Shaz leaps in to help mayor's charities fund

DUDLEY'S taxi boss took a different method of transport when he jumped out of a plane at 10,000ft for charity.

Chairman of Dudley Private Hire Taxi Association Shaz Saleem took part in the challenge to help Dudley Mind, YMCA and Dudley Alzheimer's Society, which are the Mayor of Dudley's chosen charities this year.

Shaz called it an amazing experience but promised his mother he would never do it again after he safely landed. Shaz is one of Mayor Councillor Dave Tyler's borough ambassadors.

Shaz was snapped falling from the sky over Salisbury in Wiltshire, plummeting to the ground attached to instructor Ryan.

His original fundraising target was £1,000, but that has now been surpassed by £100 with more cash still coming in.

He said: "It was quite scary ahead of the challenge. My mother was panicking and she made me promise her not to do it again."

"This is my little contribution as a way to say thank you to these charities who do amazing work. I feel it is important to give back something and show appreciation."

To donate, search for 'Shaz Saleem' on www.btplc.com/mydonate



Olympians Hugh Porter and his wife Anita Lonsbrough open the sportive



All smiles at the cycling club sportive



Tom Cole, Tom Charles, Jake Yeates, Lorna Sharples and Nick Cole



On the starting line for the Halesowen Cycling Club sportive



Another competitor in the sportive



Two cyclists on the road as part of the event in Halesowen

Cool choir get ready for major concert

THE Midlands' 'coolest choir', Got 2 Sing, present their spectacular One Voice concert at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Sunday. The two-hour event, starting at 6pm, promises 'roof-raising harmonies and a flag-waving Proms finale'.

Got 2 Sing include choirs in Wolverhampton, Stourbridge, Bromsgrove and Bewdley, and are planning to start a new choral group for Birmingham. Tickets cost £23 (£19 under-16s). See www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 780 3333. Or for more information on the ten Got 2 Sing choirs in the region, see the www.got2sing.co.uk website.

Riders raise clubhouse cash

CYCLISTS saddled up to raise money to restore their stadium's ageing clubhouse.

A total of 170 riders from Halesowen Cycling Club put their pedal power to the test, setting off at 8am on Sunday from the Manor Abbey Stadium.

The Halesowen One Hundred

Sportive was started by Black Country cycling legend Hugh Porter when the former world champion dropped the starting flag.

Routes

Cyclists could choose from two routes - 64 miles (100km) and 39 miles (60km). The riders followed a clearly marked route from the stadium out into the Worcestershire

and Staffs countryside before looping back to the finish with a circuit of the club's velodrome.

Organisers believe the event has raised more than £2,000 to help transform the wooden clubhouse dating from 1948. The total amount is yet to be confirmed.

Veteran Mr Porter said: "I am a patron of the club and it was a huge privilege to be asked to drop the flag

and support the members and this important event.

"Last year, the club asked me to donate the £1,000 raised by the previous event to Compton Hospice. This year, the club is raising money for its clubhouse and I'm looking forward to seeing how the money helps to transform it."

Paul Barker, coach and organiser of the sportive, said: "We have been

running sportives for three years and now the club is looking to invest in its future by making the clubhouse a better place.

"We had 170 cyclists take part, with an impressive 140 of these taking up the 100km challenge. We think we have raised in excess of £2,000 and are looking forward to using that money to encourage more people to take up cycling."

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Exams? No really it's advice that is failing

GIVING advice to parents of teenagers whose exam results weren't what they would have hoped, psychologist Elle Boag of Birmingham City University says the worst possible thing they could say is: "You have done your best."

Really? That's the very worst thing a parent can say? Because I would have thought "You're a failure, you've let us all down, it's time you moved out, and we've booked you a room at the YMCA" would give it a very decent run for its money.

Apparently, telling children they have done their best implies that their best isn't good enough, that they got the grades they deserved. She suggests it is more helpful to simply say: "It is what it is."

Well, I'm sorry, but I can't think of any circumstances where it is acceptable to say "It is what it is". What, exactly does it mean? It is just a jumble of words constructed into what passes for a sentence. It is a hateful, pointless cliché that has crept into common vocabulary over the past few years. It is one short step away from "We are where we are."

If somebody said "It is what it is" to console me, it would be tempting to reply: "I might have failed my exams, I might have failed in life, I have probably sentenced myself to a lifetime of drudgery. But at least I can string a sentence together without sounding like a reject from a late-night reality TV series."

For some reason, I don't usually get much sympathy.

□ □ □

OUR hospitals are at breaking point, squeezed; a perfect storm of an ageing population, expensive treatments and squeezed public finances. At least that's what we're always told.

So you would think NHS bigwigs would roll out the red carpet for a few community-minded lads who dressed up in silly outfits for a sponsored bed push, raising £2,500 for their local hospital.

Instead Jan Ditheridge, the chief executive of the NHS Trust which runs Ludlow hospital, refused to accept the money, because the men did the bed push dressed up as female nurses. Ms Ditheridge thought it "inappropriate, highly sexualised, and demeaning."

Now I think it takes a very vivid imagination to view 10 burly lads dressed up as Hattie Jacques as "highly sexualised", but each to their own.

Still, I suppose she should be congratulated to sticking to her principles. Even to the cost of the patients she is supposed to serve.

Charles royally backed as we reach THAT anniversary



Charles the cherishable? Can the nation get behind their next monarch?



Dame Helen Ghosh – not really maintaining the trust of middle England's twin set set



Diana – 20 years on, but aren't we all a little weary of the ongoing hype over her death

Long live king, but leave Diana in peace

AFTER an opinion poll this week revealed public disappointment with Prince Charles, the Windsor spin-machine rolled out Dickie Arbiter, former Palace press secretary to tell the nation: "It is time we learnt to cherish him." Well, maybe it is. But the snag with Charles in his up-and-down relationship with us plebs is that just when we're about to cherish him, he does something uncherishable.

TAKE his affair with Camilla which led to the break-up of his marriage and, ultimately, the death of his sons' mother. Arbiter insists: "To chastise the Prince unendingly for his relationship with Camilla is deeply unfair. If anything, he will be a modern king, with a deeper trove of life experience, because of it." Really? So cheating on Diana will make Charles a better king? Whatever we may think about HRH, does anyone cherish Dickie Arbiter?

THE good people of Cromer will no doubt be reassured that the invasion, riots, rampaging mobs, blatant theft, road blocking and general thuggishness that forced their little east-coast resort into lockdown at the weekend was, according to the police, merely "low-level disorder." You can't help wondering whether the cops would have used that description if it had happened in, say, the chief constable's front garden.

"LOW level." I can't recall weasel words ever being quite so weasely. And despite two days of anarchy, anguish and distress, not a single arrest was made. If this outrage had been caused by football fans or motorbike gangs, would the police response have been the same? Of course not. They would have turned up mob-handed and the cells would be full. So why the "low-lev-

JUDGING by the funniest one-liners at the Edinburgh Festival this week, you can only conclude that funny isn't as funny as it used to be.

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



el" approach? Possibly because those involved were travellers. The courts have ruled that some travellers are a separate ethnic group and you can't help feeling that when the word "ethnic" crops up, the authorities like to look the other way. That restaurant being invaded by 40 burly blokes stealing booze from the fridge? It's just low-level disorder. Nothing to see here, folks.

AFTER a season steeped in controversy over Gay Pride badges, altered flapjack recipes and dropping the "Easter" from egg hunts, National Trust head Dame Helen Ghosh admits she may have alienated "some of our perhaps more traditional visitors." She still doesn't get it, does she? Ghosh seems to imply that "traditional" visitors are some cranky minority within the NT. The truth is that if you take away the traditional folk, there is no National Trust. In the main it is supported, staffed and visited by over-50s, middle-class English people whose only interest is to see grand old houses and beautiful gardens. They are not some radical hip-hop, happening youth group and they don't like being made to feel uncomfortable about sex, racism or slavery. If NT folk were asked how NT properties could be improved, they would probably opt for a good cup of tea and more lavatories, not a lecture on Gay Pride.

YES, it was a terrible tragedy and yes, she was a good dresser. But it was 20 years ago and I cannot be the only one to have reached Diana-exhaustion on this over-hyped anniversary. We have seen and heard quite enough authorised and unauthorised tapes, gossip, video and books. Can the nation cope with another 'Diana – Queen of Style' supplement? I think not.

DOES anyone seriously believe that up to a dozen young Muslim men and the local imam spent six months planning a major bomb attack at their headquarters in the little Spanish town of Ripoll and nobody suspected anything? Pull the other one. It reminds me of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Only a tiny percentage of the Catholic community were IRA guerillas. But for every IRA gunman there were dozens of folks who would never dream of informing the cops. A survey among British Muslims for Channel 4 last year revealed that while 96 per cent were against terrorist violence, only 34 per cent would inform the police if they thought somebody they knew was getting involved with people who support terrorism in Syria. And in Ripoll? One resident told the world's media: "We are in a state of shock." I dare say some are more shocked than others.

I WROTE about a colleague who took his three-year-old daughter through a car wash and told her it was Alton Towers. It reminded a reader of deception at the dinner table one Christmas during the austere 1940s. The parents thought the roast would fool the kids but one of them noticed that the "chicken" had four legs. A rabbit.

THE irony now is that chicken is everyday nourish while rabbit has become a delicacy.

At least it stops short of saying "and then tuck me up nicely in the cupboard". Now, reader, say goodbye to Talking Point for another week. Bye bye Talking Point. "Bye bye reader".



Nothing personal, but this is too far

IN these times of social media frenzy, we're all supposed to have as many 'friends' as possible, or at least 'likes'.

But what about the people who don't want to join in the self-congratulatory mutual appreciation society that has such a tight grip on the internet?

And what if you can't find anyone to be your friend?

As usual, Talking Point can come to your rescue, and in this case the solution is very often right under your nose.

I refer to the personification of such items as documents, motor vehicles and even kitchenware. As our world becomes ever more touchy-feely (without the actual physical contact, of course) it would appear that it's not enough for instructions and terms and conditions to remain plain and simple. No, they have to be given a personality all of their own.

Take for example this message on a receipt: "I'm important please keep me safe – you need me for collection!" Is it a cry for help or, as the exclamation mark suggests, a nudge in the ribs to remind the customer to take it with them to the shop? And don't you dare think you can get away with not acknowledging your recently acquired friend, as this instruction shows: "Say hello to your new contactless card". So, all of a sudden, a piece of plastic takes on a life of its own.

Passers-by can't escape this patronising drivel either. Just consider this command, spotted on the forecourt of a car dealership: "Take me home with you today". What, without paying for the car, or even inquiring within?

To cap it all (no pun intended) the most excruciating of all were the care and use instructions for a food container: "Wash me first before you use me, please, I can either be washed in the dishwasher (top rack only) or in warm, soapy water."

It's the "top rack only" directive that gets me, as if the container will be watching your every move when it comes to washing the damn thing, although it does say "please". I'm all for getting an important message across in the most effective way but surely this latest form of communication has gone too far.

Not only is it irritating, it's also making fools of us for assuming that we don't notice how widespread it has become.

Mind you, I think it's only fair to give that food container one more moment of glory: "Ensure I'm thoroughly dried after being washed."

At least it stops short of saying "and then tuck me up nicely in the cupboard". Now, reader, say goodbye to Talking Point for another week. Bye bye Talking Point. "Bye bye reader".

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It was only a bit of fun fundraising

MEN have been portraying women for centuries. Shakespeare would not have got far with his plays without them, as all his female leads were played by young boys with high pitched voices.

There is a dame in every pantomime and it is how Les Dawson, Paul O'Grady, The Two Ronnies and many more made a living.

It's entertainment, it makes people laugh, well most of them at least, sadly they tried to dress.

I just hope her stupid decision has not dampened anyone else's spirits when they come to do any more fund-raising.

People donate when they are having fun. I doubt men in collars and ties would have raised £2,500.

Well done boys.
JENNY JAMES
Wordsley

Jan Ditheridge, chief executive to Ludlow Hospital, has seriously refused to take money collected for the NHS Trust because it was collected by men dressed as nurses.

Highly sexualized? Don't think so. I can't imagine men finding any of these 'nurses' attractive no matter how sexy they tried to dress.

I would be interested to see how many of the nurses at Ludlow Hospital found it demeaning as she claimed it was, it only served to highlight nurses not take away respect for them.

Batteries store up problems

THE future is electric but I don't know where all this extra 'juice' is going to come from.

But rather than bore you with my apocalyptic forecasts on energy, I will bring you up to date on why these thoughts were prompted.

I had to take my better half to the doctors, and arriving on time like I always have, I was deemed half an hour early even though my appointment card said 16:30; so we had to wait until 17:00. So I put on my car radio and, thinking about the climate, I did not run my engine. My wife came out I turned the key – flat battery.

So I called the RAC and we got the car started but that's not the end, the engineer told me whenever I have the radio on to run my engine. So I have to now wonder in this brave new age of the electric car, can we have a battery that lasts longer than a AAA battery to run my in-car radio?

S T VAUGHAN
Yardley Wood

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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EMAIL

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Thanks for kind acts at supermarket

COULD I give thanks to the person, unknown to me, who kindly handed in my bag in to Sainsbury's in Blackheath, after I'd inadvertently left it outside on the bench?

Such honesty is becoming rarer these days, sadly.

If not for this person's honesty I would have been without my money, smartphone, newish glasses for computer lessons and house keys.

And, most importantly, my dog Rory would have been still waiting for me to return to the house that day, later on in the afternoon, to feed him tea!

I'd also like to say thank you also to Sainsbury's and the Brookfleet cab taxi driver for their help, I've asthma.

J ADAMS
Rowley Regis

Experts are up in cloud cuckoo land

I think, our supposed transport experts are living in cloud cuckoo land when they very misleadingly insist that 'mainline services' can still be returned to the Black Country Railway after slow, frequent stopping, 'bus on rails' trams have first gone on only 6.7km of the existing but unused 56kms of the 120kms mainline railway between Worcester, the Black Country and Derby.

I think, many Black Country patriots would want to join me in flooding Councillor Roger Lawrence (labourleadersoffice@wolverhampton.gov.uk) and Mayor, Andy Street (andy@andy4wm.co.uk), with the sensible request that they should return the freight and passenger trains to the full 120kms and put the 'bus on rails' trams on roads to replace buses – not trains. And, per kilometre, at a fraction of the cost, too – at least, one fifth!

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FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL



Proms in the Park takes place at Haden Hill House Museum on Sunday, September 10



Costumed characters will travel back to the War of the Roses at Manor House Museum



Chances to go behind the scenes at the 17th century Oak House in West Bromwich



The home of a founding father of the Methodist Church in America will be open

Behind the scenes at historic buildings

HISTORIC buildings in Sandwell will be sharing some of their secrets and stories later this month.

People can go behind closed doors at Haden Hill House, off Barrs Road, Cradley Heath, when visitors between 11am and 3pm on Thursday, September 7, can unlock the secrets of the attic and store rooms at this

Victorian gentleman's residence. The museum is also open Friday, September 8 to Sunday, September 10, and there will also be Proms in the Park from 2pm until 6pm on September 10.

There is also a rare chance to visit Haden Old Hall, next to Haden Hill House and not often open to the public. The hall, open between 2pm and 4pm on Saturday and Sunday, Sep-

tember 9-10, was built in the 1600s.

History buffs can also get a closer look at the impressive belvedere tower which is undergoing restoration at Oak House in Oak Road, West Bromwich. This 17th century farmer's house was developed in the 1650s.

There will be 'medieval mayhem' at the Manor House Museum, Hall Green Road, West Bromwich on Sep-

tember 9 and 10, 11am until 3pm.

The Manor House will be welcoming the Buckinghams Retinue, who will be putting up their medieval encampment in the grounds of the 13th century house and recreating the time we now call The Wars of the Rose. Visitors can see the arms, armour and firepower available to a medieval army.

Between 2pm and 5pm on Septem-

ber 10, people can visit the childhood home of Francis Asbury, who was the first Methodist Bishop of the USA. He is considered one of the founding fathers of America.

His writings about his travels during the American War of Independence are among fascinating historical resources on show at Bishop Asbury Cottage in Newton Road, West Bromwich.

More back call to save former Hingley home

MORE objections have been lodged over plans to knock down an historic house in the Black Country.

Dozens have contacted Dudley Council insisting Hatherton Lodge in Cradley – once home to famous chainmaker Noah Hingley – needs to be saved.

The once-grand Victorian property has fallen into disrepair but campaigners believe it should only be sold to someone willing to refurbish it.

Council planners are considering plans to demolish the building in Drews Holloway and replace it with seven homes.

Mr Hingley, whose world-renowned Netherton ironworks N Hingley & Sons made the anchor for the Titanic, lived at the property with his son Benjamin during the 19th century.

The bid to knock it down has been met with a backlash from campaigners who insist the building should be preserved due to its historic importance.

Beans means big hospice fundraiser

THE Mary Stevens Hospice will be hosting their annual Summer Fayre on Saturday in the grounds of the hospice, opening at 11.30am.

Each year the Hagley Road charity opens its gates to families, friends, loved ones and supporters to come and join them for a big family fun day, with all funds raised supporting the families who rely on the care of the hospice.

Among the attractions will be children's characters from Frozen and other Disney favourites, X-Factor star Wagner Carrillo and a parade of floats from 10.30am on the streets of Oldswinford, led by five young people selected as this year's fayre royalty.

It promises to be a day to remember for 11-year old fundraiser Louis Johnson, who will be getting into a bath of beans with The Fizzogs to raise money.

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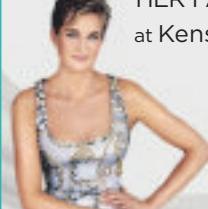
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Mammoth attraction gets new home by canal

AN ENORMOUS visitor has pride of place at a Black Country attraction until next spring.

Fluffy, a stuffed woolly mammoth, has been taken in by Dudley Canal Trust and is not far off touching the ceiling of their canal-side Birmingham New Road base, The Portal.

Housed in the Biffa Award Gallery, visitors can meet Fluffy – previously housed at the now closed down Dudley Museum & Art Gallery – for free, seven days a week from 10am until 5pm.

Sarah Fellows, the trust's heritage activities officer, said: "Fluffy the mammoth used to live at Dudley Museum & Art Gallery, and when that shut he went out to Bilston Craft Gallery as a part of a pre-historic exhibition along with dinosaurs and things like that."

Extinct

"He is not due to go out to Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum until April next year, so we offered to temporarily home Fluffy until he goes there. We've given him a home – a roof over his head."

Complete with masses of fur, huge hooves and tusks – Fluffy truly is a sight to behold, and those who go to meet him at the trust's headquarters will be able to find information on woolly mammoths, which became extinct 15,000 years ago.

Ms Fellows said: "It's free to visit and people are encourage to take as many mammoth selfies as they like. Around 10,000 to 15,000 years ago, they would have been living here in Dudley and there's information on what they were like."



Sarah Fellows with Fluffy the woolly mammoth at The Portal in Dudley

Express views at forums

PEOPLE in Dudley borough have been urged to share their views at community forums about ways of improving the area.

The next round of the Dudley Council-run meetings will be held from September 4 to October 2. People can meet with local councillors and police officers. Forums also offer community groups the chance to bid for grants of up to £5,000 for projects.

Councillor Patrick Harley, leader of Dudley Council, said: "Making decisions that are right for local people, and the borough as a whole, is key and that's why we want to put local people at the heart of the decision-making process. It's more important than ever before for people to come along and talk to us.

For a list of the upcoming forums visit the dudley.gov.uk website.

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No closure as paedophile imam still evades justice

A VICTIM of a paedophile religious leader who went on the run during his trial says he is constantly on her mind almost a year after he evaded justice.

Hafiz Rahman, who preyed on two young girls at a Black Country mosque in the 1980s, fled to Bangladesh after claiming he was too ill to attend court.

Rahman, aged 58, of Ballard Road, Netherton, was found guilty of five charges of indecent assault in October. But after the jury found him guilty in his absence, Rahman boarded a flight to Bangladesh. He was later sentenced to 11 and a half years for his crimes against children.

Rahman was the imam at Queens Cross mosque in Cradley Heath and convicted of historic crimes against the girls, to whom he was supposed to be giving religious instruction.

West Midlands Police insisted the hunt to find the fugitive remains an 'active investigation', while the authorities are understood to have discovered a possible location for him. No arrest has as yet taken place. Hopes he could be brought back to serve his sentence were raised earlier this year when files were passed to extradition experts.

One of his victims, now a 40-year-old mother, said the imam's escape had prevented her from moving on. She believes he may never be found.

"I still have no closure. I'm still angry and frustrated. It is constantly in my mind," she said. "Others now know he was doing what he was doing but I haven't got closure."

She remains angry that a closer watch wasn't kept on Rahman by the police. She added: "I don't think they will ever find him, Bangladesh is a very big country."

The woman suffered multiple stab wounds and the boy had an arm injury.

Foster denied further charges of aggravated vehicle taking, possession of a bladed item in a public place and interfering with a motor vehicle.

He will stand trial at Stafford Crown Court on January 15.

A MAN has denied attempting to kill a woman following a stabbing in Dudley.

Ralph Foster, 55, from Bayswater Road, pleaded not guilty to charges of attempted murder and section 18 wounding with intent to cause GBH. He appeared at Stafford Crown Court.

The charges relate to an incident at Himley Hall just before 8pm on July 16 which saw a 30-year-old woman and her eight-year-old son taken to hospital.

The woman suffered multiple stab wounds and the boy had an arm injury.

Foster denied further charges of aggravated vehicle taking, possession of a bladed item in a public place and interfering with a motor vehicle.

He will stand trial at Stafford Crown Court on January 15.

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£10k to make landmark theatre safe

A FUNDRAISING mission to raise £10,000 towards the restoration of a landmark theatre in the Black Country has been launched.

It comes as Dudley Hippodrome campaigners say 'a few hurdles' have been put in the way of their bid to bring the beloved building back to life as a venue, to be renamed Black Country Hippodrome.

A crowdfunding page – called Restore the wonderful Dudley Hippodrome – was set up by The Black Country Hippodrome group. Funds are needed for essential work.

In recent months a major clean-up has taken place inside and out by a 15-strong team at the Castle Hill building, empty since 2009.

A statement on the fundraising page reads: "The task of cleaning up the Hippodrome is obviously massive and is 100 per cent reliant on volunteers at this stage who cannot risk their lives going into what is potentially an unsafe environment, with loose ceiling tiles, hanging light fittings and most seriously of all – asbestos.

"We want to see the Hippodrome restored and opened to the public as a multi-purpose arts venue"

The group must raise around £5 million to ensure the plans can go ahead.

Free concert to celebrate BCMG

BIRMINGHAM Contemporary Music Group celebrate 30 years in existence with a free concert next weekend.

The BCMG perform an hour-long concert at the CBSO Centre in Berkley Street, Birmingham, on Sunday, September 10, at 6pm. For free tickets see www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 780 3333.

Suspicious fire destroys school building



Firefighters battled for more than an hour to tackle the blaze in an outbuilding Photo: @FireBrierley

THIS stark image shows all that remains of an outbuilding after a suspected arson attack on the site of a former high school in Dudley.

A blaze ripped through the old forest school building at the site Pensnett High School, Brierley Hill. The Tiled House Lane site is now one of the locations used by the post-16 education department of Pens Meadow Special School.

Around 10 firefighters tried to

save the building as they tackled the intense blaze, the cause of which remains unknown. Firefighters used two hose reels to put out what they described as a severe fire on Saturday.

Centre

A spokesman for West Midlands Fire Service said: "We were called at 7.17pm to a severe fire in the forest school outbuilding of Pensnett High School.

"Two appliances attended, one from Dudley and one from Brierley Hill. Two hose reels were used. Crews left the scene just over an hour later."

A decision to close Pensnett High School was made with effect from July 2010, despite protests from parents. It remained open for two years as a learning centre.

The site has suffered several arson attacks in recent years.

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Paramedics' dramatic actions shown on TV

THE inspirational actions of paramedics tending to patients in the West Midlands have been screened on TV.

The dramatic and graphic footage shows the life-saving intervention crews made to a 75-year-old grandfather in Rowley Regis who went in to cardiac arrest.

And the documentary, called Ambulance, also aired the heart-warming moments a high-risk expectant mother from Stourbridge give birth to her son in the bedroom.

The first episode of the eight-part series which was shown on the BBC last week promising a 'behind the sirens insight', centred around West Midlands Ambulance Service, which is one of the busiest services in the country dealing with 3,000 calls a day.

Advised

Terry Billingham went into cardiac arrest at his home in Rowley Regis, at 8.30pm on March 11.

His wife Joan made a desperate call to 999 and was advised how to give him CPR by the call handler. Meanwhile, paramedics Katie Linford and Sarah Watson were dispatched from around five miles away and arrived at the home within minutes.

The documentary captures their heroic actions in trying to revive Terry on the living room floor, ironically while Casualty is on the television in the background.

After he had been in cardiac arrest for an agonising 26 minutes they managed to get a pulse, to the visible relief of his wife Joan looking on.

For Katie, it was one of the rare occasions she has witnessed a patient survive a cardiac arrest. She said: "I get nervous. I try and keep it under wraps but deep down this person's life



Terry is given treatment on his living room floor after going into cardiac arrest



This family in Stourbridge celebrated the birth of their baby boy on television

is in your hands and it is your responsibility not to get it wrong.

"Programmes on TV and reality are quite different things."

The previous day a crew had to attend a home in Stourbridge to a 25-year-old woman in advanced labour. Paramedics considered transfer-

ring the expectant mother, who was considered high-risk.

But they made the decision to deliver at the home and the baby arrived healthy and happy.

Paramedic Natalie Greaves said: "What a privilege. To pass a baby to their mum is just lovely."

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Two solicitors are jailed after dispute

TWO Midlands solicitors have been jailed for fraud and perverting the course of justice.

Diljit Bachada, 45, was the principal solicitor at the law firm Hollies Solicitors in Bromsgrove. The victim was employed by the firm, however, in August 2012 she resigned and there followed a dispute between the two parties about money owed to the victim.

In May 2013, the victim received a county court claim made against her by the defendant for the breach of her contract of employment for £20,486.35. Attached to this claim were two contracts, signed by Bachada and the victim, who realised that she had never signed them.

The Law Society copyright at the foot of each page was incorrect and the clause stated in the contract did not come into force until July 2010, yet the documents had apparently been signed in January 2010.

Bachada was later arrested as was 41-year-old Tharindit Biring who had assisted her by providing false information in a witness statement. Bachada was found guilty of two counts of fraud and two further counts of perverting the course of justice. She was sentenced to four and a half years imprisonment. Biring was found guilty of perverting the course of justice and given 19 months jail.

Stars asked to help support ex-players



Jeff Astle died in 2002 from a degenerative brain condition

PREMIER League footballers should donate one per cent of their wages to help fund dementia care for ex-players, according to the daughter of Baggies legend Jeff Astle.

Dawn Astle said just one per cent of top footballer's wages could go a long way towards setting up care homes for those suffering with the disease.

Her father, who played 361 games for West Bromwich Albion and scored 174 goals, died in 2002 aged 59 due to a degenerative brain condition. Ms Astle, whose family set up a foundation in her father's name, said dementia affected hundreds of former players.

Research suggests footballers who repeatedly headed the ball could end up suffering from dementia.

She said: "Our dream was to have a series of care homes to provide respite or long-term care. A one per cent levy on the wages of Premier League players would raise millions to do that. Surely today's players, who have so much money, wouldn't begrudge that so those who laid the foundations for everything they have can be looked after."

End of the road for work at Spaghetti

A £4.7 million scheme to carry out vital repair work to Spaghetti Junction on the M6 is entering its final stages.

Highways England have been working around the clock to complete the project on the motorway which carries more than 220,000 vehicles a day.

More than 215 locations where concrete was damaged have been repaired and replaced.

The final stages of the scheme are set to be the most challenging as the work is heavily weather dependant.

Highways England emergency planning officer, Frank Bird, said: "We're now entering the final stages of the scheme and we'd like to thank motorists for their patience while this vital work takes place."

"Unlike some motorways in England, large stretches of the M6 and M5 in the Midlands are elevated which means that we need to ensure the integrity of the structure is maintained. Safety is our top imperative."

Build trains here and bring skills to the Midlands, says MP

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has welcomed plans to invest £1 billion in rail services but says the new trains should be made in the Midlands.

The Department for Transport has awarded the West Midlands rail franchise to West Midlands Trains Ltd, a

joint venture of Dutch-owned Abellio, Japan East Railway Company and Mitsui & Co Ltd.

The company is promising to spend nearly £1 billion on new trains, carriages, station improvements, more frequent services and 900 apprenticeships but Labour MP Mr Austin wants an assurance companies and young people in the Midlands to benefit from the investment.

He is writing to Transport Secretary Chris Grayling asking to meet the new operators to seek those assurances.

Mr Austin said: "The trains and carriages should be made here in the Midlands, parts sourced from manufacturers here and I want to see youngsters in the Midlands benefit from the 900 apprenticeships so they can get skills."

Prime Point unit ready three months early

THE first unit at a multi-million speculative development in Kingswinford has been completed three months ahead of schedule.

The 20,000 sq ft unit - Building A - at Prime Point, which is being developed by London and Cambridge Properties, the national property, investment and management company, at its flagship Pensnett Estate industrial estate is ready for occupation.

The adjoining Building B, a 30,000 sq ft unit, has also been built and left as a shell for incoming tenants to work with LCP to arrange their exact requirements. Both units can be let in multiples of 10,000 sq ft.

Andrew Preston, industrial portfolio manager of LCP, said the level of enquiries had been extremely positive.

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14 Dame Julie Walters backs Brum's bid for the games

HOLLYWOOD A-listers Julie Walters and David Harewood have joined scores of top sports stars in backing Birmingham's bid for the Commonwealth Games.

Dame Julie Walters was born in Birmingham and raised in Smethwick. The two-time Academy Award nominee has starred in films including Billy Elliot, Mamma Mia! and the Harry Potter series. She said: "Birmingham is a brilliant city, full of energy and lively people."

"It's well-known across the world both for sport and culture and it would be my city of choice to host the Commonwealth Games in 2022."

Harewood, who starred in Homeland and The Night Manager, as well as Hollywood movies including Blood Diamond, has been one of the longest-running supporters of the bid.

He said: "I support Birmingham's bid for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. What a diverse, beautiful, fantastic city, this will be the hub of energy here in the Midlands."

Safety tips on barbecues and your pet

PET owners are being advised to take extra precautions if cooking outside this bank holiday weekend to ensure their pets stay safe.

Advice issued by vet charity PDSA includes not giving pets any scraps off the barbecue which could cause them to be ill, making sure any leftover food and rubbish is securely and safely thrown away, keep lighter fluid out of reach, keep pets away from open flames and ensure pets have access to shade and plenty of fresh water.

PDSA vet Rebecca Ashman, said: "Pets are brought in having swallowed objects such as corn on the cob cores, suffering from burns if they've gotten too close to the barbecue, and can also come in because of heat stroke in the hot weather."

For more information and advice, visit www.pdsa.org.uk.

Announced

Sports stars from across 17 sports, including all Commonwealth Games sports announced as part of Birmingham's bid, have also thrown their weight behind the proposals.

International sports icons including Sir Mo Farah, Usain Bolt, Yohan Blake, Christine Ohuruogu, Adam Peaty, Ellie Simmonds, Don Quarrie, Ian Bell, Baroness Tanni Grey Thompson, Chrissie Wellington and Hakeem 'The Dream' Olajuwon are among the athletes who are supporting Birmingham. Walsall's own Ellie Simmonds, a five-time Paralympic swimming champion, said: "The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and the Sandwell Aquatics Centre will inspire the next generation of swimmers."

Adi-glass trainers add festival sparkle



Andrew Collins celebrating his award with his sculpture hanging from the ceiling in the exhibition in Stourbridge

CINDERELLA may have had glass slippers but these trainers take 'glass-wear' to a whole new level.

This amazing artwork is in the Black Country spotlight as part of the International Festival of Glass.

The weekend's festival was launched with a glitzy awards ceremony honouring the country's leading glass artists.

The world-renowned festival was taking in Stourbridge Glass Quarter with artwork of all shapes and sizes on

show. It launched at the Ruskin Glass Centre with the opening of the British Glass Biennale exhibition - the centre-piece of the festival which showcases artwork from the country's leading glass sculptors.

The exhibition features work from 63 artists, whose glass sculptures line the bright exhibition space inside the Stourbridge centre. Six awards were handed out. A sculpture featuring a chandelier of glass trainers, made by

former University of Wolverhampton student Andrew Collins, was among the award winners. The 37-year-old's piece, called 'Urban Chandelier' scooped the runners-up student prize.

Andrew, from Huddersfield, was able to get the shapes by blowing glass onto the moulds of the trainers. Artist Joseph Harrington won the Biennale prize for his sculpture called 'St Helens', two green chunks of glass that look like mountains.

Bollard at block of flats is removed

A BOLLARD placed at the entrance of a block of flats housing up to 80 elderly residents have been removed after fears they could block access for emergency vehicles.

More than 100 people signed a petition to see the bollards removed at the entrance of Russell House in Wednesbury. Council bosses removed them last week after increasing pressure from ward councillors, who also backed the campaign.

Councillor Hughes said: "I feel good about it. I think it's going to be really good for the residents. We had a meeting regarding this, they're going to be Tarmacating the front area so cars will be able to pull on and drop people off."

"The front, a lot of people use it for taxis, old people in the blocks they come back with taxis, now they're having to walk round to get in."

"We have had a couple of ambulances that couldn't get there and they had to go through the back doors."

The bollard was said to have been in place for up to six months before a petition was put together and backed by the councillors.

Councillor Kerrie Carmichael, Sandwell's cabinet member for housing, said: "We have removed a collapsible bollard from outside Russell House following concerns raised by residents."

Coffee and books sold for charities

A CHURCH in Halesowen is inviting people to a coffee morning and sale to raise funds to help tackle a muscle wasting condition.

A range of DVDs, CDs and books will be on sale for 20p each at Hurst Green Methodist Church on Narrow Lane, on Saturday. Money raised will go to myotonic dystrophy charities.

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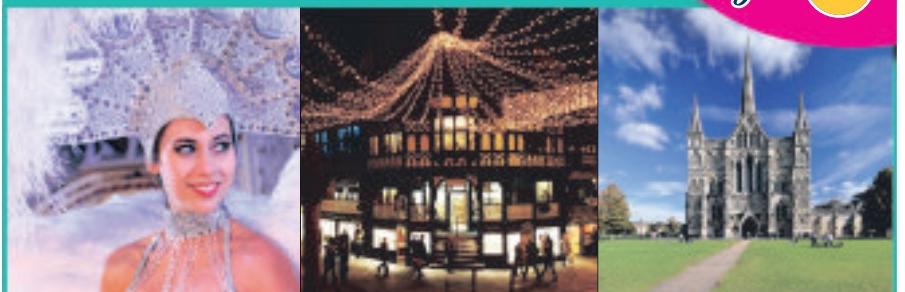
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Pupils receive GCSE exam results in new system

STUDENTS from across Dudley had cause for celebration after getting their GCSE results.

The exams were the first run under a new system, which sees youngsters given scores – ranging from 1 to 9 – in their English and maths exams instead of grades. Other subjects are still marked from A* to U.

Thursday proved to be an emotional affair for pupils and staff at Coseley School, which is closing down.

The school's top performers in its last cohort were Katie Watson and Lewis Jones, who both received trophies for highest academic achievement. They are both off to King Edward VI in Stourbridge for their A-levels. Assistant head Phil Nicholls said he was proud of staff and students' efforts last year in the knowledge the school was closing down.

Grades

At Bishop Milner Catholic College in Dudley, 90 per cent of students achieved a standard pass or higher and 77 per cent gained a strong pass or higher. The top performing student was Chloe McCollgan, who achieved the highest possible grades in all 11 of her examinations, with three 9s and eight A*'s.

Pupils at Old Swinford Hospital in Stourbridge achieved double the number of top grades in English and maths. More than one third of the new grades in GCSE maths were at the top levels of 8 or 9. In maths and English combined, a quarter of grades were at 8 or 9. More than 90 per cent of pupils secured five or more C grades and grades 4 or above in English and maths.

Eighty-eight per cent of Redhill



Katie Watson and Lewis Jones with their trophies at Coseley School. School's pupils left with a standard pass of 4 or above in English and maths, with three-quarters getting a standard pass in at least five subjects. The school's top performer was James Hill with 10 A*'s, one A, two grade 9s and one grade 8.

Children's services chief Councillor Anne Millward said: "We have some very talented students in this borough who have a very bright future ahead."

At Summerhill School in Kingswinford 87 per cent of students bagged a

standard pass in English and math, with three-quarters getting a standard pass in at least five subjects. The school's top performer was James Hill with 10 A*'s, one A, two grade 9s and one grade 8.

Children's services chief Councillor Anne Millward said: "We have some very talented students in this borough who have a very bright future ahead."

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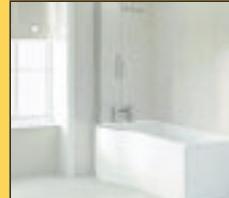


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Excellent - Brassed Off show stealers Tim Jones and Greg Yates as Harry and Jim

Making his Marc as the top tribute to T Rex

T Rextasy, Robin 2, Bilston
THEY were boar'n to boogie on Saturday with a feather boar-waving crowd in party mood for the return of the top tribute to 1970s glam rocker Marc Bolan and his band T Rex.

Danielz and co, regular visitors to the Robin 2, Bilston, did not disappoint. Opening with Raw Ramp, the corkscrew-haired frontman gave us his best Bolan pouts and poses as the four-piece hit top gear with Telegram Sam and a rocked up version of Deborah.

A semi-acoustic interlude featured Dreamy Lady and Cosmic Dancer and there were some rarities for the dedicated fans, including Thunderwing and Sailors Of The Highway. T Rextasy reached the finale of the first of two hour-long sets with Jeepster.

Back after a 20 minute break, now sporting a red boa and a spangled jacket, Danielz recharged the party with Bolan's best - I Love To Boogie, Solid Gold Easy Action and Children Of The Revolution - before reaching a crescendo with Ride A White Swan and Get It On.

After a delirious encore of Metal Guru and Hot Love, Danielz reminded the audience that September includes what would have been Bolan's 70th birthday and the 40th anniversary of the car crash that claimed his life. Meanwhile, the musical legacy is safe in T Rextasy's hands.

LEON BURAKOWSKI

REVIEWS

Brass is best with local talent in a Grand show

Brassed Off, Grand Theatre

THIS is the first in-house production for Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre in 40 years and let's hope it won't be long before the next.

Although I have seen Brassed Off before somehow the fact that this one had LOCAL stamped all over it hit just the right note.

Well-known actors teamed up with home-grown actors and, of course, Wolverhampton Brass Band to make this show extra special.

Adapted by Paul Allen from the screen-play by Mark Herman, this full-scale production was everything and more than I expected.

The 'star' of the show was Jeffrey Holland, probably best known for his portrayal of 'Spike' in BBC TV's Hi-De-Hi. He played Danny the ex-miner and veteran conductor of Grimley Band. But, it was local amateurs, Tim Jones and Greg Yates, who excelled as mining pals, Harry and Jim.. Their

timing and delivery were superb. Add to that amateur actresses Donna Heaslip and Susie Wilcox as their wives, and a group of talented community actors who appear as the miners and their families, the amateur performers did the theatre proud.

Brassed Off takes us back to 1994 when Danny's lifelong ambition to lead Grimley Colliery Band to the National Brass Band Competition at the Royal Albert Hall looks like it might finally happen. But as Grimley pit faces closure, the future looks bleak. Flugelhorn player Gloria arrives in town bringing with her a renewed sense of hope and a touch of romance, but no-one knows who she's really playing for. The show runs until Saturday. Grab a ticket if you can.

SUE ATTWATER

LEON BURAKOWSKI

The annual weekend celebration of life and sport in the countryside returns to Weston Park

THE Midland Game Fair has been the event of choice for country sports enthusiasts and families looking for that special day out for over a decade.

Held over the weekend of September 16 and 17 at Weston Park in Shropshire, the Midland Game Fair has become the annual meeting place for the shooting community as well as all those who want to experience the best the countryside has to offer.

The vast parkland offers a superb setting for the huge countryside event which includes country sports events, displays of skills, a food fair, range of musical stages and stalls selling a massive range of equipment and clothes.

Jousting

This grand family day out features an impressive line-up of activities, especially inside the Realtree Main Arena. Here visitors can watch jousting team the Knights of Middle England; Britain's longest established and leading dog display team, Essex Dog Display; Ye Olde Redtail Falconry; fun sheep racing with the Lamb National; the traditional Hound Parade; and an insightful demonstration from seasoned demonstrator, countryman Brian Brinded.

There is also the ever-popular Folk Roots Festival across three different stages; the Prince Albert Angling Fish-



Owners will put their dogs through their paces at the Midland Game Fair

ing Village; a Working Dog Village; Falconry Village; Airgun Expo and Game-keeper's Row; as well as a Fieldsports Arena, Food Festival and Beer in the Park, where visitors can take a break.

There's also the Gunmaker's Roadshow, which brings together world-class shotgun manufacturers and distributors, a Survival Camp; and whole host of family inspired entertainment, from ferret displays and donkey rides to have-a-go fun and demonstrations in rural crafts.

As Britain's largest field-sports-themed outdoor event, the

2017 annual Midland Game Fair boasts grand finals of the Chudleys Gundog Championship and BASC Clay Shooting.

There are more than 700 trade stands selling the latest in countryside goods, outdoor wear and accessories.

To discover more about this year's event at Weston Park, visit www.midlandgamefair.co.uk website.

For more information on all of Countryman Fairs events visit the website at www.countrymanfairs.co.uk and join them on Facebook.

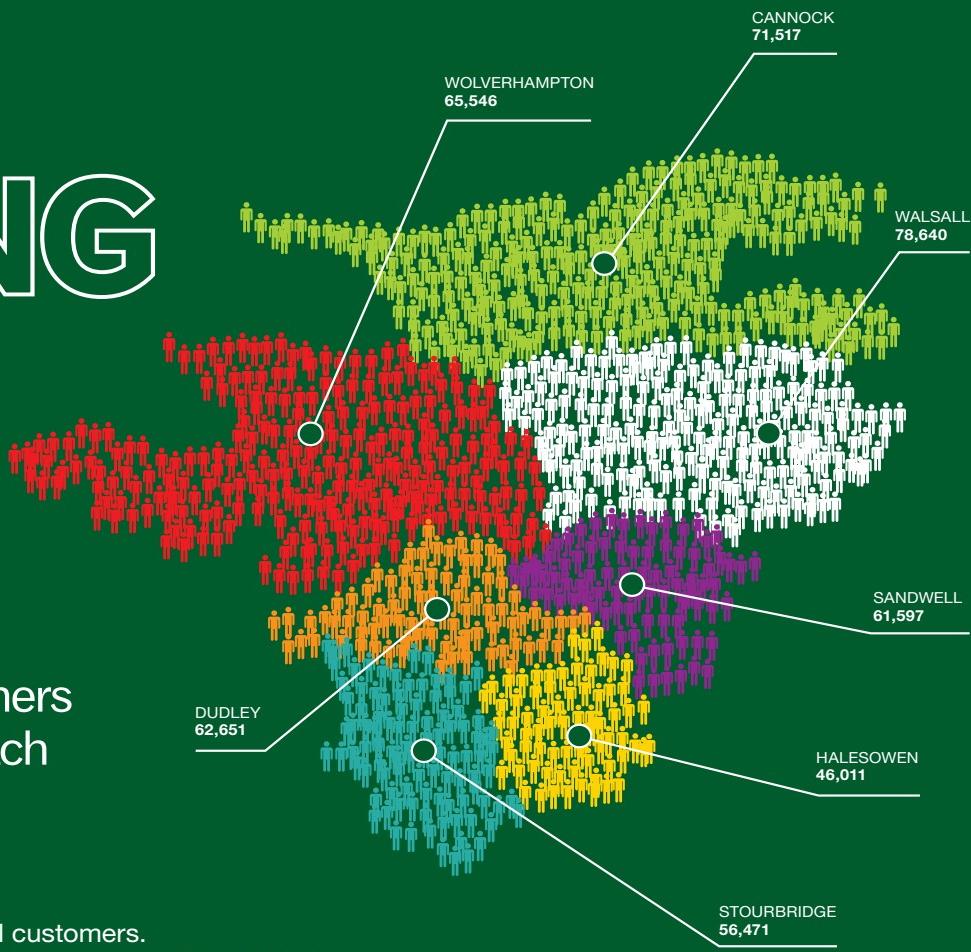
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Stay independent with help to get your home adapted

Commercial feature

Dudley Council is offering help to Dudley borough residents who need to adapt their homes to better meet their needs.

Anyone who is struggling with daily life in their home can ask for help. If a member of the household of any age is having difficulties bathing, getting upstairs, even getting into the home, help is on offer to adapt the property to better meet these needs.

Dudley Home Improvement Service, part of Dudley Council, offers the adaptations package. Grants are available to pay for adaptations, along with an adaptations package of advice and practical support. This consists of an expert recommendation, support to design and build the adaptation from technical officers and council approved builders. All work is overseen by the council, so there is no hassle and no stress to people.

Home adaptations for independence are available to people who own their own homes or are private rental tenants. Council tenants can already request adaptations to their homes through the council. The aim is to help people stay independent in their homes. Typical adaptations include handrails, stair rails, ramps, level access showers, stair lifts, through-the-floor lifts, even home extensions to provide extra sleeping or bathing facilities.

An initial assessment by an occupational therapist will take place and this will establish the type of adaptation needed to suit a



Anyone who is struggling should ask for help from the adaptations service person's needs and to help them stay independent and safe in their home.

The service offers adaptations to people of any age. Full grant funding is always provided for adaptations needed for children under 18.

Alan Lunt, Dudley Council's strategic director of place said: "Anyone who is finding it difficult to manage in their home, or has a member of their

household who is struggling should ask for help from the adaptations service. Lots of support is on offer, along with grant funding to pay for home adaptations for many people. It's all about keeping people safe and independent in their homes and making life more liveable."

Contact Dudley Home Improvement Service on 0300 555 0055.

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Make your home work for you

Home adaptations for independence

Struggling in your home? Are you or a member of the family having difficulties bathing, getting upstairs, or even getting into your home?

If you are a homeowner or private rental tenant and need assistance with adapting your property to better meet the needs of a member of your household, we can help.

Dudley Council offers grants to pay for adaptations*, uses reputable, approved tradespeople and can arrange all works for you.

*Dependant on criteria



- Level access showers
- Door widening
- Stairlifts
- Ramps
- Extensions



DUDLEY HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



HALESOWEN, Sandringham Road £1,350 pcm+ Fees
A modern extended detached family home tucked away in this quiet cul-de-sac on the popular Lodgefield Estate in Halesowen. Featuring: entrance hallway, lounge with dining area, games room with patio doors leading to a very private large rear garden, stunning kitchen with appliances, downstairs w.c., 5 bedrooms, 2 en-suites plus family bathroom with shower, garage & driveway for 2/3 cars. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Grange Road £975 pcm+ Fees
A deservingly spacious detached family with many character features, entrance hallway with parquet flooring, large lounge with multi fuel burner, separate dining room, fitted kitchen, utility, 3 double bedrooms, large refitted bathroom, private long rear garden, large detached garage with electric roller door, gas central heating, double glazed. EPC: E



RUBURY, Segbourne Road £950 pcm+ Fees
• COMING SOON • A spacious 3 bedroom semi-detached home, being fully refurbished. The property is double glazed, centrally heated and has accommodation to comprise a reception hall, through lounge / diner, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, family bathroom, enclosed rear garden off road parking and a garage.



HALESOWEN, Whittingham Road £775 pcm+ Fees
Large 3 bedroom semi-detached house with a perfect location for Earls & Windsor High School & Halesowen College. Featuring an entrance hallway, 1 large reception room, a modern kitchen/dining room, utility room, downstairs w.c., 3 good size bedrooms, family bathroom with shower a separate shower cubical, lovely rear garden with shed & summer house, garage & driveway parking for several cars. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Manor Lane £700 pcm+ Fees
• ALL BILLS INCLUDED IN RENTAL • Large 3 bed Apartment above a Pharmacy in this very convenient location with bus links into Birmingham. Private entrance leading to fully fitted kitchen, large lounge, dining room/3rd bedroom, downstairs w.c., stairs leading to 2 good size bedroom, family bathroom with separate shower, gas central heating, new carpets throughout. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Haden Hill Road £675 pcm+ Fees
A beautifully presented terraced property situated in Haden Hill area close to local transport links, Haden Hill Park, Halesowen Town Centre and Cradley Heath. Featuring 2 bedrooms, master en-suite, upstairs family bathroom, 2 good size reception rooms, fully fitted kitchen, utility, separate dining area, downstairs cloakroom, easy to maintain rear garden, gas central heating and double glazing. A property not to be missed! EPC: E 12 MONTH MINIMUM CONTRACT



CRADLEY HEATH, St Anne's Road £650 pcm+ Fees
Fully redecorated and new carpets throughout. An unfurnished semi-detached home close to local shops and Cradley Heath Train Station. Featuring 3 good bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, large rear garden and driveway parking for 2 cars. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN/COLLEY GATE, Barnwood Close £615 pcm+ Fees
A well presented newly painted mid terraced property comprising hallway with stairs to first floor, fitted kitchen, large lounge with patio doors to the rear garden, double glazing, gas central heating, double bedroom with fitted wardrobes and a further smaller double, white bathroom suite with shower over bath and tiled floor off road parking at the front of the property. EPC: TBC



WEDNESBURY, Charlotte Road £575 pcm+ Fees
A 3 bedroom semi-detached home being double glazed and has accommodation to comprise a reception hall, through lounge/diner, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, family bathroom, all electric (No GAS) and enclosed rear garden. EPC: TBC



ROWLEY REGIS, Aqua Court £575 pcm+ Fees
Beautifully presented and not to be missed. A top floor apartment, a stones throw away from Blackheath Town Centre and local shops. This modern 2 bedroom apartment has an open plan lounge/kitchen, house bathroom with shower, rear garden, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking space, viewing highly recommended. EPC: B



HALESOWEN/BLACKHEATH, Southwick Road £550 pcm+ Fees
Located minutes from Blackheath Town Centre and a short drive away from the M5 J2 and Rowley Regis Train Station. This modern 2 bedroom apartment, located on the 1st floor, features a brand new fitted kitchen, 2 lovely reception rooms, private rear garden, white bathroom suite with shower, 2 double bedrooms, on road parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Regent Court £550 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished ground floor flat in a sought after location recently refurbished. Featuring 2 large double bedrooms with built in wardrobes, large living room, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower. Other benefits include electric heating, communal gardens, parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Hammersley Close £525 pcm+ Fees
Located in a very quiet cul-de-sac, close to local bus routes to Halesowen, Cradley Heath and Merry Hill, also close to Cradley Heath Train Station, is this unfurnished mid terrace house, comprising of: gas central heating, fitted kitchen, living room, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, rear garden, driveway parking. EPC: C



WORDSLEY, Wordsley Court £525 pcm+ Fees
1st floor fully refurbished large apartment within walking distance of Wordsley Green & King George V Park. Featuring lovely lounge, 2 generous size double bedrooms, fitted kitchen (no appliances), shower room, secure parking to rear of property. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH/OLD HILL, Wycherley Way £495 pcm+ Fees
A 1st floor apartment on a popular development close to Cradley Heath and Old Hill Train Station, Old Hill shops and bus links. Featuring gas central heating, double glazing, lounge, fitted kitchen with washing machine and fridge freezer, 1 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower, parking space. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Brett Young Close £495 pcm+ Fees
Situated within a few minutes walk of Halesowen Town Centre and local bus station for buses into Birmingham City Centre. This well presented 1 double bedroom ground floor apartment features a fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, house bathroom with shower, cosy lounge, double glazing, gas central heating and 1 allocated parking space. EPC: B



BRIERLEY HILL, Norwood Road £475 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished end terraced house, close to local shops and not far from Merry Hill Shopping Centre. This large house features a lovely living room, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing, rear garden, on road parking. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Somers Road £450 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished ground floor flat close to Halesowen Town Centre. Featuring gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, on road parking and a rear garden. EPC: TBC



BRIERLEY HILL, Foxdale Drive £425 pcm+ Fees
Situated in a quiet location and within walking distance to Brierley Hill Town Centre and a short drive or bus to Merry Hill Shopping Centre. This is ground floor apartment, comprising of: 1 double bedroom and 1 single, fitted kitchen with no appliances, house bathroom with shower, spacious lounge, electric heating, double glazing, 1 allocated parking space. EPC: TBC



LYE, Eagle House £285 pcm+ Fees
A 1st floor studio apartment in the centre of Lye Town, also close for Lye Train Station. Featuring a combined lounge/bedroom, fitted kitchen with electric cooker, shower room, electric heater, shared laundry room, parking at rear, private communal area with seating. EPC: E

PROPERTY



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The rear lounge has patio doors to the rear garden and a feature fire surround with a gas living flame fire.

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Semi-detached property situated on popular estate

This property in Raven Crescent, Ashmore Park, Wednesfield, is for sale offers in the region of £119,995.

**WEDNESFIELD
£119,995**

Internally the home has an entrance hall, lounge with adjoining dining room/sitting room, fitted kitchen, two double bedrooms and a family bathroom.

Situated on the ever popular Ashmore Park estate, Connells are offering for sale this two-bedroom semi-detached home with green

views to front. Externally the home has off-road parking to front and a pleasant rear garden with outbuilding and side porch.

For further details on this pleasant home contact Connells 01902 710170.

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For those who like 'doing' rather than 'watching', there is the availability of the pool table and dart board.

Loyalty

The pub itself boasts a wide range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits including four 'Real Ales' which they rotate weekly. Regulars very often enjoy ales such as Bathams, AJ Ales, Oakham, JHB, Stairway To Heaven and MA Pardoes Entire, plus many more!

The pub also runs a loyalty scheme which means customers can get 10p back on their card for every pound they spend.

A pub spokesman added: "With a juke box and free WiFi to compliment the regular entertainment every Friday, customers cannot ask for much more from a local pub!"

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Brandhall Golf Club

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION
TO VARY A PREMISES LICENCE

An application for the variation of a Premises Licence has been made by Rajinder S Daley on behalf of Brandhall Golf Club Committee to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council in respect of premises known as Brandhall Golf and Social Club which are situated at Heron Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 8AQ. The proposed variation is as follows:

Sale of alcohol from 0800 hrs to 0100 hrs seven days per week. A record of the application may be inspected at Trading Standards and Licensing Section, 4th Floor, Court House, 335-337 High Street, West Bromwich B70 8LU during normal office hours Monday to Friday.

Any representations may be made to the responsible authorities regarding the application must be made in writing to: Trading Standards & Licensing, Homes & Communities Directorate, Sandwell Council House, PO Box 2372, Oldbury B68 3BS, by: 28th September 2017.

It is an offence, liable on summary conviction to a fine up to Level 5 (£5000) on the standard scale, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with the application.

Brandhall Golf Club, Heron Road, Oldbury B68 8AQ
Any further information tel: 0121 5522195 golf professional shop

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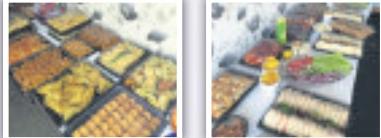
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Nadia is a breath of fresh Eyre as Jane

It took Nadia Clifford approximately 0.2 seconds to accept her dream role as Jane Eyre. Actually, that's not true. It took less than that for her to break into a scream after her agent called to say she'd landed the part.

The people she was walking past, in London's Soho, looked onaghast as she squealed with joy.

"It was after my third audition, I was on my way to meet a friend for lunch, by which point I was emotionally invested in the role and the show.

"My agent called 20 minutes after I left the audition with Sally, the director, and told me. I was in the middle of Soho and I just screamed down the phone. Anyone who was in the vicinity of me for 20 yards must have thought I was a mad woman. I was thrilled."

Nadia is, of course, anything but mad. An avowed Charlotte Brontë fan, she is quite literally playing her dream role in the National Theatre's production of Jane Eyre, which runs at Birmingham's REP from Monday until September 16 as part of a major 21-city tour of the UK.

This year marks the 170th anniversary of the first publication of Jane Eyre – and Charlotte Brontë's much-loved story of the trailblazing Jane is still as inspiring as ever. The National Theatre's bold and dynamic production tells the story of one woman's fight for freedom and fulfilment.

From her beginnings as a destitute orphan, Jane Eyre's spirited heroine faces life's obstacles head-on, surviving poverty, injustice and the discovery of bitter betrayal before taking the ultimate decision to follow her heart.

Nadia had read the novel several times before auditioning for the role. Her first read through was as a 14-year-old, while she immersed herself again at 21 before re-reading it twice for the role.

"It's a mammoth role and so I wasn't taking it lightly. I wasn't allowing myself to fantasise about getting it. It was so beyond the realms of possibility I just didn't want to make a fool of myself. I was pinching myself when it eventually happened."

"It's funny because reading it with the knowledge that I was going to be playing the role meant I read it in a different way to someone just enjoying the work of Charlotte Brontë. What was really amazing when I read it knowing I'd got the role was that it catapulted me back to my teens. I felt a strong sense of identification with a kindred spirit, which so many people feel."

"Jane Eyre is universal at articulating love and anger and jealousy. It's an enriching experience to read good writing. It makes you feel acknowledged in your own emotional state."

In Sally Cookson's highly-acclaimed staging, Nadia plays Jane Eyre with Tim Delap as Rochester. They are joined by Hannah Bristow (Helen Burns/Adele/St John/Grace Poole/Abbot), Matthew Churcher (Musician), Alex Heane (Musician), Melanie Marshall (Bertha Mason), Paul Mundell (Mr Brocklehurst/Pilot/Mason), David Ridley (musician), Evelyn Miller (Bessie/Blanche Ingram/Diana) and Lynda Rook (Mrs Reed/Mrs Fairfax). The cast is completed by Ben Cutler, Jenny Johns, Dami Olukoya, Francesca Tomlinson and Phoebe Vigor.

The exciting new stage version of Jane Eyre was originally presented in

No plain Jane – Nadia Clifford stars as Jane Eyre



two parts at Bristol Old Vic, and then transferred to the National Theatre, re-imagined as a single performance, playing to sold-out houses at the NT's Lyttelton Theatre.

Nadia says she pours herself into the role:

"I think that in order to be authentic with your performance you have to draw on your own emotions and experience.

That can be quite a painful thing to do. You are accessing little boxes that are hidden away.

"You can't splash around in those dark emotions during the normal course of a day without doing some serious damage to your mental health."

"But I have to access those places and when I am on stage. I still have to draw on personal experience and relationships and events from my life to bring truth and honesty to Jane's journey."

"OK, so I'm not an orphan and I don't know what it's like to be traumatised as a child, like she is in that relationship with Mrs Reid.

But I know loneliness and frustration and I know what it is to be overwhelmed by emotions. They are all in Jane's frame of reference. As an actor, you have a tool box and those are in mine."

Nadia grew up in Manchester. As a teen, she was a super, uber, ultimate, turbo fan of the Brontë sisters. She wasn't far from Howarth and would visit the parsonage where

I know loneliness and frustration and I know what it is to be overwhelmed

they grew up. "I am a big fan of all the sisters' work and I love period dramas. Howarth is an amazing place. It's such an incredible place to be. It's so isolated and it's so humming with this energy. It's so cut off. Knowing how intelligent and analytical all three of the sisters were was very important to me. They had to work hard. Because of their gender, they couldn't come out and earn a living as novelists. They had nothing like the recognition they had after their lifetime."

Jane Eyre remains a bona fide classic – as enjoyable for the cast and crew as it is for the audience.

Nadia adds: "It's a massive rollercoaster. We haven't had a moment to think. We travel on a Sunday, perform Monday to Saturday with eight shows a week and each show is three hours. I never leave the stage. But it's amazing to be involved in this whirlwind that completely swallows up you. I've had to forsake everything in my life for now, it's full on. We have a holiday coming up soon and I am really looking forward to downtime so that I can reboot. But being part of this, with the National, really is a dream."

● For tickets visit www.birmingham-rep.co.uk
● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.



Furs frontman Richard Butler



Pretty good way to catch up with the Furs

The veteran post-punk band The Psychedelic Furs, led by brothers Richard and Tim Butler, are touring the UK for the first time in five years – including a gig at Birmingham O2 Institute on Tuesday.

At the Digbeth venue and the other venues on their nine-city jaunt they will be celebrating many of their many singles they've released throughout their career.

Since 1980, the Furs have released seven studio albums and a string of singles that have had great success both here and abroad.

From the early days of Sister Europe and We

Love You and continuing on through such iconic hit songs as Love My Way, Heaven, The Ghost In You, Heartbreak Beat and the classic Pretty In Pink, the Psychedelic Furs have certainly left an indelible impression.

The Singles tour will be a chance to revisit highlights from their career and at Birmingham fans will also be able to get reacquainted with Stiff Records' queen of quirk Lene Lovich, as the Lucky Number hit-maker will be supporting with her band.

See the website academymusicgroup.com/o2institutebirmingham for further details about this and other forthcoming gigs.

Countdown until Richard's big night



TV and radio comedy star Richard Digance is on the road in celebration of his 50-year career.

He will stop off at Bilston's Robin 2 for a show this Wednesday, September 6.

Richard first realised his dream of doing stand-up when he was a student, inspired by someone who was soon to be one of comedy's biggest names.

"There was this guy who used to sing at a folk club near where I went to college in Glasgow," explains Richard. "He was a bloke called Billy Connolly. When he finished,

guys would buy him beers and the girls would try and chat him up. I thought 'that's what I want'."

"I joined the BBC and worked with the satirical man of the moment, Bernard Braden. My job was to write songs every week for his show. That's how I started. I've been getting away with it ever since."

"I went on tour in 1974 with Steeleye Span; and that was my first entry to theatres. Through the 70s I did the Breakfast In America with Supertramp, I toured with Tom Jones and with Jethro Tull. I was only known as a support act, which is OK, I was really just cashing in

on other people's audiences."

Richard joined forces with comedy legend Steve Martin to tour the US. "I'd watch him every night and just think 'wow'."

Touring with Jim Davidson he was asked if he would like a TV show. "So I went straight on TV with my own show, from 1984 to 1995. I was able to do what I wanted, such as playing guitar duets with people such as Brian May and Status Quo. Then I went on to Countdown for 19 years. It wasn't what I wanted to be. I love telling stories and playing guitar – it's just really fun."

Oh Bhoy, Danny getting Stronger



Scottish comedian Danny Bhoy brings his new show to Wolverhampton on Wednesday.

His 'Make Something Great Again For Stronger Better Future Tomorrow Together' show will be performed by the acclaimed stand-up at the Slade Rooms.

Danny began his career in comedy 19 years ago and has been a regular success at the Edinburgh Fringe and in Canada. He has already sold out his gig later this month at the Old Rep in Birmingham.

Elvis and Dreamboys feature in one nighters

There's a big week of one-nighter shows on the way before Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre gets into its autumn schedule of five-day musicals and plays. On Tuesday the Alex hosts The Simon and Garfunkel Story featuring such classic songs as Bridge Over Troubled Water and Homeward Bound with Sam O'Hanlon as Paul Simon and Charles Blyth as Art Garfunkel. Those bare-chested hunks The Dreamboys will muscle in for a teasing time at the Alex on Wednesday. Tribute award-winner Rob Kingsley brings A Vision of Elvis on Tour to the Suffolk Street-Queensway venue on Friday, September 8, complete with his Cadillac Band and the Sweet Sensations. Next Saturday singer and impersonator Joe Longthorne is in concert at the Alex on Wednesday.

MUSICAL TREATS IN THE NEW WELLINGTON



Musical fans from across the region are rubbing their hands together for a musical extravaganza throughout September.

Tributes ranging from Freddie Mercury, Michael Jackson and Robbie Williams are set to delight crowds over the next 5 weeks.

The New Wellington in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, is not only treating its patrons to great entertainment it is also a great place to eat, drink and socialise.

Set on the main Stourbridge to Dudley Road, not far off Brierley Hill high street, the venue offers a carvery all day everyday from 12 noon to 8pm with a selected main menu from 5pm.

For the early starters amongst us they also offer a buffet style all you can eat breakfast from 8am to 11am, which has been brought back by popular demand.

The New Wellington also offers a Disco and Karaoke every Friday night. So why not come down and have a sing along!!

Each Saturday in September The New Wellington will host Blue Rock

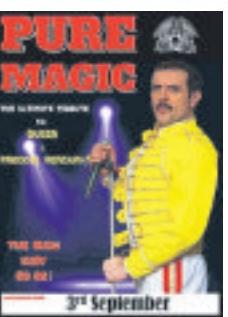
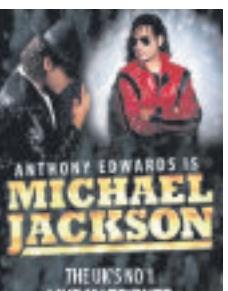


Rewind (2/9) The Melvyn Hancox Band (9/9) Thunder Daze (16/9) and Bourbon Alley Blue Band (23/9).

Every Sunday night is Tribute night kicking off on Sunday 3rd September with Pure Magic, the ultimate tribute act to Queen and Freddie Mercury – a kind of magic not to be missed!

Anthony Edwards as the late, great, Michael Jackson, & then spilling over to Sunday 1st October, 'Let him entertain you' as you enjoy Ollie Hughes as Mr Robbie Williams.

The New Wellington
383 Brettell Lane
Brierley Hill
DY5 3LO
01384 76066



TRIBUTE NIGHTS EVERY SUNDAY

Sunday 3rd September



Sunday 10th September



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Sat 9/9 The Melvyn Hancox Band

Sat 16/9 Thunder Daze

Sat 23/9 Bourbon Alley Blue Band

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SUNDAY'S TV SEPTEMBER 3

CHOICE



Fiona Bruce (right)

Fake or Fortune?
(BBC1, 8pm)

Fiona Bruce and art expert Philip Mould travel to Australia to verify whether a painting bought from an English auction site is a lost work by impressionist Tom Roberts, one of the country's most important artists. The owners have fallen on hard times, and desperately need to prove the painting is genuine. The investigation leads them to retrace the time Roberts spent in Britain and uncovers some alarming forgeries.

BBC1

- 6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 10.00 Sunday Morning Live
- 11.00 Homes Under the Hammer. (R) 12.00 Bargain Hunt. (R) 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.15 Money for Nothing. (R) 2.15 Escape to the Country. (R) 3.00 Points of View. 3.15 Lifeline. 3.25 Songs of Praise. 4.00 Diana: The Last Princess of Wales. 5.00 Film: Toy Story 3. (2010) Woody, Buzz and the other toys accidentally end up in a daycare centre when their owner grows up. At first this seems like the perfect new home for them, but when they realise the dangers lurking under the surface, they begin to formulate an escape plan. Pixar animation sequel, with the voices of Tom Hanks and Tim Allen.
- 6.35 BBC News.
- 6.50 Regional Programme.
- 7.00 **Countryfile.** A look at how our food is harvested, whether it is large-scale crops to stock supermarket shelves or smaller hand-picked harvests for local markets. John Craven is in Oxfordshire meeting the only distillers in the country to use an ancient strain of rye to create a new type of gin, while Margherita Taylor is in Norfolk with a farmer keen to extol the virtues of the humble British radish.
- 8.00 **Fake or Fortune?** Fiona Bruce and art expert Philip Mould travel to Australia to verify whether a painting is a lost work by impressionist Tom Roberts, one of the country's most important artists.
- 9.00 **Strike – The Cuckoo's Calling.** Long-buried secrets are revealed, putting Strike and Robin in danger as they close in on Lula's killer. Robin receives key information from a salesgirl at the boutique Lula visited, while John points out that he, Tony and Yvette all have an alibi. Last in the series. (R)
- 10.00 BBC News.
- 10.20 Regional Programme.
- 10.30 **New Tricks.** Detective drama, starring Dennis Waterman as one of three retired officers dedicated to tackling unsolved cases. (R)
- 11.30 **Film: Keeping Rosy.** (2014) A businesswoman takes increasingly desperate measures to make amends after she commits an uncharacteristic violent act. Thriller, starring Maxine Peake.
- 12.55 Weather for the Week Ahead. 1.00 BBC News.

BBC2

- 6.00 **The Instant Gardener.** (R) 6.45 Garden Rescue. (R) 7.30 Gardeners' World. (R) 8.30 The Beechgrove Garden.
- 9.00 **Countryfile.** (R) 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. 11.30 Lorraine's Fast, Fresh and Easy Food. (R) 12.00 A Cook Abroad: Monica Galetti's France. (R) 1.00 Boxing: World Amateur Championships. 3.00 Equestrian: Burghley Horse Trials. 5.00 Flog It!
- 6.00 **Wild Tales from the Village.** Documentary following the animals that live in a remote rural French village, including red squirrels, wild boar, dormice and stone martens. As the wildlife struggles to survive the winter, they take full advantage of living so close to unsuspecting humans in their search for food, while trying not to be detected. (R)
- 7.00 **Tribes, Predators & Me.** Gordon Buchanan travels to Papua New Guinea, where he meets a tribe on the banks of the Sepik River that has learned to live alongside crocodiles. Members of the tribe teach him to hunt fully grown adult predators using only their bare hands and discovers their belief that a giant crocodile lives in a nearby lake and protects them from harm. Last in the series. (R)
- 8.00 **Dragons' Den.** Deborah Meaden, Peter Jones, Touker Suleyman, Tej Lalvani and Jenny Campbell consider the profit-making potential of a crowdfunded range of personalised luxury bags, a range of free-from, allergy-friendly frozen curry sauces and a thick-yarn crafting business.
- 9.00 **Astronauts: Do You Have What It Takes?** The candidates move from basic to advanced stages of selection, heading to some of the most specialised astronaut training facilities in Europe.
- 10.00 **III Behaviour.** Joel is consumed by paranoia as he and Tess resort to locking Charlie in the basement, and accidentally destroys the last round of chemotherapy drugs. Last in the series.
- 11.00 **Film: Let Me In.** (2010) A bullied boy befriends a mysterious girl, unaware she is a vampire who is behind a recent series of killings. Horror remake, starring Chloe Grace Moretz.
- 12.45 **Film: Return from the River Kwai.** (1988) 2.25 **Sign Zone: Countryfile.** (R) 3.20 **Holby City.** (R) 4.20 This is BBC Two.

ITV

- 6.00 **CITV: Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids.** (R) 6.20 Sooty. (R) 6.30 Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) 6.50 Dino Dan: Treks Adventures. (R) 7.00 Oddbods. (R) 7.05 Oddbods. (R) 7.15 Super 4. (R) 7.30 NinjaGo: Rebooted. (R) 8.00 **Thunderbirds Are Go.** (R) 8.25 Weekend. 9.25 **ITV News.** 9.30 **Judge Rinder.** (R) 10.25 Joanna Lumley's Postcards. (R) 10.55 James Martin's French Adventure. 11.20 **Long Lost Family.** (R) 12.21 **ITV News: Weather.** 12.30 **Bear Grylls Survival School.** (R) 1.00 **Film: Happy Feet.** (2006) Animated adventure, with the voice of Elijah Wood. 3.00 **The X Factor.** (R) 4.30 **Victoria.** (R) 5.35 **Regional Programme:** Weather. 5.40 **ITV News: Weather.**
- 6.00 **Tipping Point: Lucky Stars.** New series. Ben Shepherd presents a celebrity quiz, in which contestants Melanie C, Louis Walsh and Anton Du Beke answer questions to win turns on an arcade-style machine.
- 7.00 **Coronation Street.** Phelan makes a grave decision about Andy, Rana and Kate's night out ends in upset, and Todd leaves Summer and Amy to their own devices.
- 8.00 **The X Factor.** The long-running talent contest continues, as Louis Walsh, Nicole Scherzinger, Sharon Osbourne and Simon Cowell judge their second batch of auditionees.
- 9.00 **Victoria.** The queen suspects that her husband is attracted to another woman, and discovers that she is pregnant with a second child – leaving her concerned that motherhood will dominate her life and reign, at the expense of any other possibilities. Below stairs, new dresser Cleary thinks that the palace is haunted, but Brodie believes there is a natural explanation for the events that have frightened her.
- 10.05 **ITV News: Weather.**
- 10.20 **Judge Rinder's Crime Stories.** Barrister Robert Rinder examines real-life cases, looking at the events leading up to crimes, going through the police investigations and summing up the trials. (R)
- 11.25 **Gold Rings.** A brother and sister and two Royal Navy shipmates compete to identify images on an LED floor while viewers can play along using the series app. (R)
- 12.20 **Jackpot247.** 3.00 **Motorsport UK.** 3.50 **ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 **Kirstie's Handmade Treasures.** (R) 6.15 **Last Man Standing.** 6.40 **Outlaw Triathlon.** 7.35 **Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) 8.00 **Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) 8.30 **Frazier.** (R) 9.00 **Frazier.** (R) 9.30 **Sunday Brunch.** 12.30 **The Simpsons.** (R) 12.55 **The Simpsons.** (R) 1.20 **Film: Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days.** (2012) Family comedy sequel, starring Zachary Gordon. 3.15 **The Crystal Maze.** (R) 4.10 **The Great British Bake Off.** (R) 5.25 **Channel 4 News.** 5.45 **Formula 1: Italian Grand Prix Highlights.** 8.00 **From Russia to Iran: Crossing the Wild Frontier.** Lennox Wood and his guide travel by any means available through Azerbaijan, encountering terrifying dogs and nomadic shepherds in the Gobustan desert. Then it is on to Georgia, where Lennox goes in search of a hermit monk who lives on top of a 45m tall stone monolith, passes the birthplace of Stalin and visits an old Soviet mining town.
- 9.00 **Film: Exodus: Gods and Kings.** (2014) Premiere. Moses, the adoptive brother of the pharaoh of Egypt, is sent into exile, where he receives a message from God demanding he set all the country's slaves free. When his brother refuses to comply, the kingdom is struck by a series of devastating plagues. Biblical epic, starring Christian Bale, Joel Edgerton, Sigourney Weaver and John Turturro.
- 10.00 **Film: Safe House.** (2012) A CIA agent has to protect a captured fugitive from mercenaries, but also has to resist his prisoner's mind games. Thriller, with Denzel Washington and Ryan Reynolds.
- 1.50 **Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA.** The chef helps a New York restaurant stuck in the 1980s. (R) 2.40 **Gillette World Sport.** An interview with boxer Marco Huck. 3.10 **KOTV Boxing Weekly.** Reece Bellotti looks to keep his perfect record intact at the O2 in London. 3.35 **Para Triathlon.** Superhero Tri, Jonnie Peacock, David Weir and Kadeena Cox are among the stars appearing in the inaugural event, which took place at Donney Lake. (R) 4.30 **Location, Location, Location.** Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer revisit Matt Rushworth, who wanted to settle down in Windsor, and a couple from Sheffield with different opinions about their property. (R) 5.25 **Jamie's Comfort Food.** Bites. Jamie demonstrates how to make a marshmallow pavlova. (R)

CHANNEL 5

- 6.00 **Milkshake!** Poppy Cat. 6.10 **Little Princess.** (R) 6.25 **Mr Men.** (R) 6.35 **Milkshake! Monkey.** (R) 6.40 **Milkshake!** Bopping About. (R) 6.45 **Simon.** (R) 6.50 **Peppa Pig.** (R) 6.55 **Wisper.** (R) 7.00 **Bob the Builder.** (R) 7.15 **Fireman Sam.** (R) 7.25 **Oily the Little White Van.** (R) 7.30 **Paw Patrol.** (R) 7.50 **Blaze and the Monster Machines.** (R) 8.15 **Noddy: Toyland Detective.** (R) 8.35 **Froggots.** (R) 9.05 **Shimmer and Shine.** 9.20 **Digby Dragon.** (R) 9.35 **Peppa Pig.** (R) 9.45 **Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom.** (R) 10.05 **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** (R) 10.30 **Football on 5: Goal Rush.** (R) 11.10 **Penguins Make You Laugh Out Loud.** (R) 12.05 **Monkeys Make You Laugh Out Loud.** (R) 1.05 **Police Interceptors.** (R) 2.05 **All New Traffic Cops.** (R) 4.00 **All New Traffic Cops.** (R) 5.00 **Traffic Cops: On the Edge.** (R)
- 6.00 **Traffic Cops: Under Attack.** Thieves towing a stolen generator on one wheel along town and country roads cause chaos, smashing the barriers on a closed level crossing and coming close to causing a train crash. (R)
- 7.00 **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** High Court enforcement agents Paul Bohill and Steve Pinner are in Birmingham on a potentially dangerous, full-scale eviction of a large traveller community. (R)
- 8.00 **Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights.** Action from the opening round of fixtures, including Saracens v Northampton Saints, London Irish v Harlequins and Gloucester v Exeter Chiefs.
- 8.55 **5 News Weekend.**
- 9.00 **Film: Fifty Shades of Grey.** (2015) Premiere. A naive young literature student's life is thrown into turmoil by an affair with a mysterious billionaire. Initially she is intrigued by his aloof and distant manner, but soon realises he is harbouring dark secrets and desires. Erotic drama based on E.L. James' bestseller, starring Jamie Dornan. Including 5 News Update at 22.00.
- 11.25 **My Secret Sex Fantasy.** New series. A detailed look at the deepest fantasies of ordinary men and women, who volunteer to reveal them on camera, asking what their deeper meanings are beyond the sex.
- 12.20 **OMGI! Rise of the Insta-Babes.**
- 1.10 **SuperCasino.** 3.10 **Judy Garland: In Life and Death.** (R)

DIGITAL

- BBC Four**
- 7.00 **The World's Most Beautiful Eggs:** The Genius of Carl Faberge. 8.00 **BBC Proms 2017.** 12.40 **Singer-Songwriters at the BBC.** 2.35 **The World's Most Beautiful Eggs:** The Genius of Carl Faberge. Close
- ITV3**
- 11.00 **The X Factor.** 12.35 **Film: Around the World in 80 Days.** (2004) 1.35 **FYI Daily 4.00 Film: Around the World in the 80s.** (2012) 2.55 **Film: Beethoven's 2nd.** (1993) 3.55 **FYI Daily 4.00 Film: Beethoven's 2nd.** (1993) 4.45 **FYI Daily 5.00 Film: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.** (2005) 7.00 **Film: Inception.** (2010) 8.05 **FYI Daily 8.10 Film: Inception.** (2010) 10.00 **Film: Family Guy.** 11.55 **American Dad!** 12.55 **The Cleveland Show.** 15.00 **Viral Tap 2.30 Teleshopping.**
- ITV3**
- 12.55 **Midsomer Murders.** 2.55 **Film: The Secret Garden.** (1993) 3.55 **FYI Daily 4.00 Film: The Secret Garden.** (1993) 5.00 **Midsomer Murders.** 9.00 **Sunday Night at the Palladium.** 10.00 **Diana: The Day Britain Cried.** 11.00 **Law & Order: UK.** 1.05 **Foyle's War.** 2.50 **The Knock.** 3.45 **Wycliffe.** 4.40 **Rising Damp.** 5.05 **Judge Judy.** 5.30 **ITV3 Nightscreen.**
- ITV4**
- 3.45 **Football's Greatest.** Paul Gascoigne 3.55 **Storage Wars.** 4.20 **The Big Fish Off.** 5.25 **Minder.** 6.25 **Cycling: Vueltta a Espana 7.25 World Cup 2018 Qualifier.** Hungary v Portugal (Kick-off 7.45pm). 10.00 **Cycling: Tour of Britain 11.00 Film: Maximum Conviction.** (2012) 12.05 **FYI Daily 12.10 Film: Maximum Conviction.** (2012) 1.10 **BRDC Formula 3 Championship Highlights.** 2.05 **Barry McGuigan: Sports Life Stories.** 2.55 **ITV4 Nightscreen.** 3.00 **Teleshopping.**
- E4**
- 11.00 **Made in Chelsea: Ibiza.** 12.00 **Don't Tell the Bride.** 1.00 **Streetmate.** 2.05 **Film: The Tigger Movie.** (2003) 3.40 **Film: Rio.** (2011) 5.30 **The Big Bang Theory.** 9.00 **Film: The A-Team.** (2010) 11.20 **The Big Bang Theory.** 12.20 **Tattoo Fixers on Holiday.** 1.20 **Don't Tell the Bride.** 2.25 **Body Fixers.** 3.20 **Hollywoods.**
- Film4**
- 11.00 **Made in Chelsea: Ibiza.** 12.00 **Don't Tell the Bride.** 1.00 **Streetmate.** 2.05 **Film: The Tigger Movie.** (2003) 3.40 **Film: Rio.** (2011) 5.30 **The Big Bang Theory.** 9.00 **Film: The A-Team.** (2010) 11.20 **The Big Bang Theory.** 12.20 **Tattoo Fixers on Holiday.** 1.20 **Don't Tell the Bride.** 2.25 **Body Fixers.** 3.20 **Hollywoods.**
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- 11.00 The Phantom.** (1996) 1.00 **Baby's Day Out.** (1994) 2.50 **Eragon.** (2006) 4.55 **Congo.** (1995) 7.00 **Evolution.** (2001) 9.00 **Four Weddings and a Funeral.** (1994) Romantic comedy, with Hugh Grant and Andie MacDowell. 11.15 **Instinct.** (1999) 1.40 **Mindscape.** (2013) 3.45 **Close.**

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MONDAY**Dear Viola, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

Shy accountant Katie is working at a local newspaper when she takes over the advice column after the regular writer retires. Sifting through the letters, she finds one from a widower, who is unable to get over the death of his wife years earlier. They begin corresponding with each other and she soon finds herself falling in love with him. Romantic comedy, starring Kellie Martin and Jefferson Brown. (2014)

WEDNESDAY**Fifty Shades of Grey, Channel 5, 11pm**

A naive young literature student's life is thrown into turmoil by an affair with a mysterious billionaire. Initially she is intrigued by his aloof and distant manner, but soon realises he is harbouring dark secrets and desires. Erotic drama based on EL James' bestseller, starring Jamie Dornan. (2015)

THURSDAY**A Risk Worth Taking, Channel 5, 3.10pm**

A woman caring for her terminally ill husband at their home in the wilds of Scotland begins to develop feelings for a friend who is helping them to manage their business affairs. Romantic drama based on the novel by Robin Pilcher, starring Muriel Baumeister, James Wilby, Tim Dutton and Olivia Hallinan. (2008)



Little Voice, Friday, BBC1, 11.35pm

FRIDAY**Jesse Stone: Death in Paradise, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

A disgraced Los Angeles cop who has become chief of police in a small town investigates when the body of a teenage girl is found in a lake. His inquiries lead him to Boston, where he comes into conflict with the local Mob. Third in the crime drama series, starring Tom Selleck and Edward Edwards. (2006)

Little Voice, BBC1, 11.35pm

A painfully shy woman has a talent for impersonating famous performers including Shirley Bassey, Marilyn Monroe and Judy Garland. She is spotted by a greedy promoter who instinctively realises her considerable money-spinning potential, but the shrinking violet proves reluctant to step into the limelight. Comedy drama, with Jane Horrocks. (1998)

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PICK OF THE WEEK

Suranne Jones stars as Doctor Foster, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

no qualms about handing over control of the business, but Stephen fears his plans are unravelling when his charismatic former foster brother Andrew (Webb), who spent five months living with the family in the 1980s, unexpectedly arrives for the funeral. The other mourners are delighted to see him again, but Stephen can barely remember him – and becomes suspicious about his motives for turning up out of the blue.

THURSDAY
Safe House
ITV, 9pm

In 2015, Christopher Eccleston and Marsha Thomason played a married couple who turned their home into a safe house, enabling them to shelter a family forced to go on the run. It was a self-contained story, but ITV liked the format so much that they've brought it back, this time with Stephen Moyer and Zoe Tapper taking the lead roles, but playing

COMMERCIAL FEATURE**5* JOURNEY
AROUND INDIA**

Imagine walking into Mumbai train station, this is the start to your journey! You can be seated in any area of your trains destination, and enjoy a cultural evening of superb Indian food.

Journeys Indian Restaurant and Bar has recently opened off the Wolverhampton Road not far from the Birchly Island, and a visit will leave you mesmerised at the decor, service and taste.

Upon arrival we were met by a smartly dressed waiter called Monty, who we found to be very knowledgeable about the menu, decor and the history of the train stations of India.

He escorted us to our carriage and when we were seated at our table we were able to choose a drink from a variety of Indian lagers, cocktails and wines.

We followed Monty's recommendations and selected the Achari Lamb Chops and Sweet Chili Chicken as our starter which were so tender and succulent and followed it up with a main course of Methi Garlic



Chicken and the Chicken Biriyani. The train took us to food heaven, the presentation was outstanding and the taste of the different herbs and spices was sensational.

My partner and myself were so delighted with our Journey we have booked a return ticket!

**870 Wolverhampton Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 4RS**

0121 552 2111
info@journeysrestaurant.co.uk

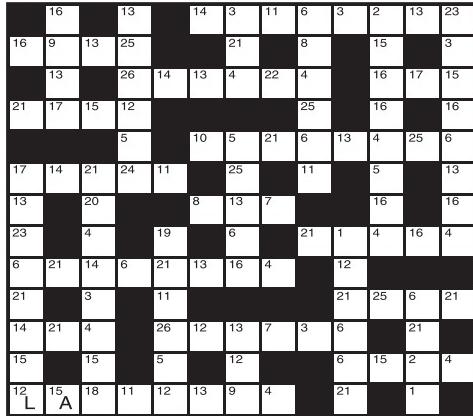


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No.445

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	N	L	G	D	Y	T	O	A	K	I	X	V	M
14	P	B	J	C	Q	H	E	Z	R	U	F	W	S

Quiz

- In the Christian church, what is another name for the Lord's Supper?
- Which hat is named after a former Moroccan capital?
- What bears the inscription Decus et tutamen, 'an ornament and a safeguard'?
- What would we normally call ortho-sulpho benzamide?
- Which Beyond The Fringe satirist died in January 1995?
- Which musical post was first held by Nicholas Lanier in 1626?
- Which spirit is named from the Dutch for 'burnt wine'?
- What is the capital of Slovakia?
- In which county is Greenham Common?
- Which famous children's novel was written by Johanna Spyri?

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

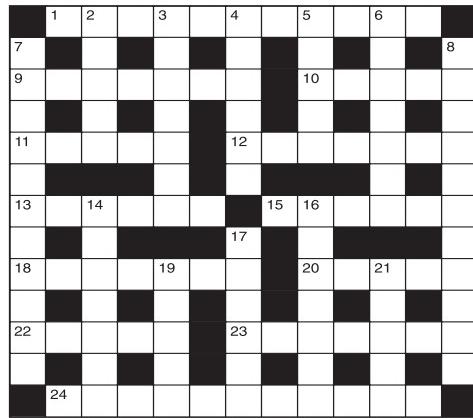
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- To succeed in tackling a part is a fine achievement (11)
- Makes climbing excursions, but stumbles (5,2)
- Draw a ship partly at the mercy of the waves (5)
- Letter E in that translation (5)
- Jersey in troubled waters around the far end of France (7)
- Bill may be seen in front of this placard (6)
- A press arrangement is scanty (6)
- Definite measures of length for those going to roost (7)
- Important arterial way in Australia or Tasmania (5)
- Made an assessment of fluctuation in trade (5)
- Give the reason for former monetary unit? (7)
- Then in great confusion using intimidation (11)

Down

- Chemical produced from an underground working (5)
- Having attended to one's affairs with a will (7)
- Take up a different attitude for sleep (6)
- What one produces on reflection (5)
- Part of the book associated with the dean (7)
- Government documents for daily publication in America (5,6)
- Foremen including a deck labourer in accusations (11)
- An abrasion is no handicap (7)
- Drama writer produces 'Enclosure for the Young' (7)
- A track made by the climber (6)
- Hog seen by the side of the road (5)
- Debauchee going to northern city in France (5)
- Rule (11)



Quick Clues:

Across

- Append (3,2)
- Spiral (7)
- Singularity (6)
- Smell (5)
- Shoe fastening (7)
- Tidily (6)
- Standing (6)
- Ignorant (7)
- Don (3,2)
- Tendency (5)
- Bishopic (7)
- Rule (11)

Down

- Full of holes (7)
- Bizarre (5)
- Sudden fright (5)
- Schoolmaster (7)
- Opaline; 2 Opaline;
- Nearness (11)
- Stood for (11)
- Non-professional (7)
- Hurricane (7)
- Infrequently (6)
- Helped (5)
- Handle (5)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:

1	7	5	9	4	3	6	2	8
6	2	3	7	5	8	9	1	4
8	9	4	6	2	1	5	3	7
7	1	8	3	9	2	4	6	5
9	5	6	4	1	7	3	8	2
4	3	2	8	6	5	1	7	9
3	8	1	5	7	4	2	9	6
2	4	9	1	8	6	7	5	3
5	6	7	2	3	9	8	4	1

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Hornpipe; 5 Poop; 9 Fair; 10 Idealist; 11 Sisal; 12 Lattice; 13 Television set; 18 Register; 19 Site; 20 Acclaim; 21 Seems; 22 Oils; 23 Druggist; Down: 2 Opaline; 3 Narrate; 4 Paddle steamer; 6 Origins; 7 Patient; 8 Tattoo; 13 Tornado; 14 Logical; 15 Vistas; 16 Nest-egg; 17 Entombs.
QUICK - Across: 1 Continue; 5 Tsar; 9 Stun; 10 Distress; 11 Comic; 12 Twinkle; 13 Pronouncement; 18 Restrain; 19 Sage; 20 Treason; 21 Rivet; 22 Seem; 23 Alienate; Down: 2 Outdoor; 3 Tension; 4 Unintentional; 6 Speckle; 7 Respect; 8 Strike; 13 Pirates; 14 Obscene; 15 Onrush; 16 Mission; 17 Neglect.

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

324487
81987
7365187

gives a country,
gives a second country,
gives a third country.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



The Crown is still reigning champ

There's one thing they never tell you about having kids, and that's to always order the salad.

When everyone around you is chowing down on a roast dinner or burger and chips, the salad might seem like a rather depressing choice. However, ordering the leaves is a must because you will inevitably also eat your child's food.

"What? You don't want that indulgently delicious goose fat roast potato?" Mummy will have it. "Rare roast beef going spare?" Yum, yum, yum. Before you know it you've eaten your own dinner plus the almost-adult sized portion of food sitting untouched in front of your one-year-old who prefers to throw crayons on the floor than eat.

Suspecting this would be the case, I ordered the salad when we visited The Crown at Wergs one Sunday lunch time, declining a delicious-sounding roast in favour of a plate of leaves.

BRISK

The elegantly furnished gastro-pub was doing a brisk Sunday trade with couples and families tucking in to tasty-looking food. Service was friendly and, on arrival, we were quickly seated, offered the menu and a highchair was sorted for our daughter.

The menu is vast and features everything from starters and sharing boards to pizzas, pastas, burgers and fish dishes. There was a separate menu of chef's specials, as well as a generous Sunday roast offering. There's even a kid's menu which doesn't just serve the identikit offerings of fish fingers/chicken nuggets, chips and beans options.

The other half already had his heart set on a roast dinner so was delighted that choices included pork, beef, chicken and fig and dolcelatte nut roast for

Roasted tomato salad with burrata and basil pistou



Country feel – the perfect spot for Sunday lunch



veggies. With a little one in tow, time was of the essence – the window in which she'll sit happily is pretty small without having to resort to episodes of Peppa Pig on the iPhone – so we were keen to place our orders.

We chose some bread and olives to keep hunger at bay while we awaited our main course dishes. Our daughter, Edie, made light work of the olives while my partner and I enjoyed the toasted bread dipped in quality olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

With a bit of down time to take in our surroundings before the main courses arrived, we noted the rustic

chic interior so typical of this type of pub. And there's an open-style kitchen where you can see the chef at work.

The food arrived and looked superb. The other half chose the pork loin roast while we ordered a mini beef roast dinner for our little girl. I, meanwhile, chose the slow-roasted heirloom tomato salad with brown rice, quinoa, edamame beans, baby kale, basil pistou and burrata, topped with griddled halloumi. I was a little disappointed, particularly at its size; it seemed a bit mealy for a main course dish, particularly with its £12 price tag. However, I consoled myself with the

knowledge that I'd be tucking into my daughter's giant Yorkshire pud very soon.

The grilled halloumi was a bit cold, slightly rubbery, and I'd argue that the tomatoes were raw rather than roasted, but that aside the rest of the ingredients were sublime. There was little room for dessert, which was quite fortunate seeing as Edie had had her fill of sitting still. The bill was just shy of £50 and included a large bottle of sparkling water and a 250ml glass of sauvignon blanc.

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5 Business & Farming

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6 Property

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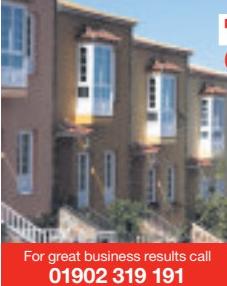
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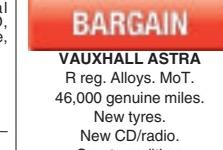
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New City Cross model adds off-road looks to Fiat Panda



An off-road look at an affordable price

By Sharon Walters

The Fiat Panda City Cross is the latest addition to the Panda family, with two-wheel-drive and urban crossover looks, all for a city car price.

The Panda City Cross is a true urban crossover designed for customers looking for a practical city car, with an off-road look, at an affordable price. Building on the style of the Panda Cross 4x4, the Panda City Cross comes with body-coloured front and rear bumper inserts and side mouldings and contrasting black door mirror caps, roof bars and door handles.

Completing the off-road look it comes with the same 15-inch alloy wheels, that can be found on the Panda Cross.

Inside, the Panda City Cross features a grey dashboard fascia with matt black instrument panel inserts and new seats, characterised by black and grey fabric with black eco-leather side inserts.

The new Panda City Cross is available in front-wheel drive combined with the 69hp 1.2-litre petrol engine.

The new Panda City Cross is available in two new body colours: the pastel Minimal Grey and Electronica Blue, the latter available exclusively on this car.



There are body-coloured front bumper inserts

An optional pack can also be specified to customise the car further: The City Cross Style pack adds ultrashine roofbars, side mouldings and skid plate as well as body coloured door mirrors and front red hooks, to bring it in line with the Panda Cross. Inside, the City Cross style pack includes an upgraded copper dashboard and panels and seat upholstery to match its four-wheel-drive sibling.

Ever since its debut, Panda has stood out for its three different personalities: as a functional city car, an ultra-compact 4WD off-roader and a stylish urban crossover with excellent off-road qualities. Its compact size, flexible interior, wide choice of engines and colour combinations, and simple line-up are now enhanced with this latest version.

The new Panda City Cross is now available to order, costing from £12,995 on-the-road for a 1.2-litre 69hp. For more information on the new Fiat Panda City Cross visit www.fiat.co.uk or to locate your nearest Fiat dealer visit www.fiat.co.uk/dealer



The new model is compact but flexible



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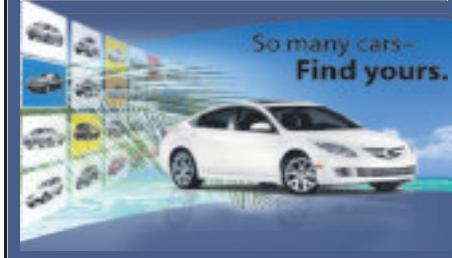
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SEAT Leon is the king for this driver

By Andy Richardson

It was somehow fitting that we ended up at a summer festival when we spent a weekend testing the Seat Leon. For the Spanish brand's rival to such classics as the Ford Focus and VW Golf is all about fun.

At one point, we wondered whether we might just drive onto the main stage, knocking over Mumford & Sons drum kit as we went, then honked our horn for the 30,000 or so fans who were gathered in the field. We were pretty sure they'd have been impressed – even if Mumford's drummer might not have been.

A head-turner with sleek lines and contemporary designs – the wing mirrors look like something out of Star Trek – it offers the same sort of Boom Boom performance as the Golf, Focus and Audi A3 but leaves you with enough change in your pocket to splash out on a case of Rioja, a weekend in Barcelona and a year's supply of acorn-fed jamon Iberico.

Affordability is one of the Seat's most obvious qualities. The difference between it and the VW Golf has narrowed over time – and the competitively-priced Skoda Octavia somewhat complicates the picture by offering even better value. But with low running costs and decent resale values, it provides more bang-for-its-buck than some of its better-known rivals.

Indeed, it's an area that the manufacturer might look to for improvements as rivals offer better warranty packages – Kia's 100,000-mile and Hyundai's unlimited-mileage offers put Seat's 60,000 over three years into the shade. The Leon is, of course, all grown up.

Introduced to the market in 2000 – and giving the VW Golf a run for its money instantly – it was updated in 2005 when further refinements are made.

The 5dr Leon finds a neat line between performance and economy – offering a nippy-but-not-rocket-powered 0-62mph in 7.5seconds and a top speed of 140mph against decent average fuel economy of 61mpg.

It handles well, gripping the road through corners like a squirrel with a nut while staying impressively flat.

The steering feels precise and that combination of precision and engaged handling makes it fun to drive.

Niggle

The infotainment system and dashboard might be improved. USB stick ports are located beneath a too-fiddly shelf while the satnav feels somehow frustrating, rather than easy to use. It is one of the few minor niggles in an otherwise thoroughly enjoyable and well-thought-out car. The media system features an eight-inch smart touch display with ten speakers, voice recognition, DAB radio and audio and phone controls that are mounted on the steering wheel.

The interior is as well designed as the almost-artistic exterior, with room for the big and tall in both front and back.

The boot space is roomy, offering ample space for the weekly shop, a couple of cases for that weekend in Berlin, a set of golf clubs or, more probably, an electric guitar with a big old amp.

A range of steering wheel and seat positions make driving a bespoke experience, where



The Leon is a high-performing, good-value-all-rounder that brings a smile to the driver's face

all options are catered for. The interior is as understated as a John Lewis advertisement with neat red trim giving the Leon a little personality.

The Leon feels decidedly safe and offers ample security functions, including seven airbags for front, side, curtain and knees along with ISOFIX points in outer rear seats

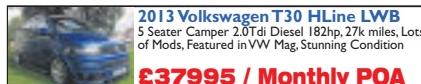
and a multi-collision breaking system with ABS and TCS. There are plenty of optional extras. Our Nevada white model was fitted with lane assist and traffic sign recognition, an automatic city brake system, traffic jam assist and rear view camera, keyless entry and a park assistance pack with more than enough sensors.

And while the Leon isn't quite the perfect car and lacks the class best in some areas, it outguns many of its rivals. Offering great value and bags of contemporary style – whoever designed the wing mirrors deserves a medal – the Leon is a high-performing, good-value all-rounder that brings a smile to the driver's face.



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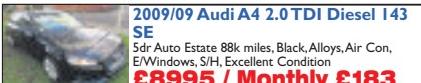
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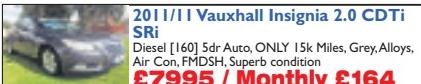
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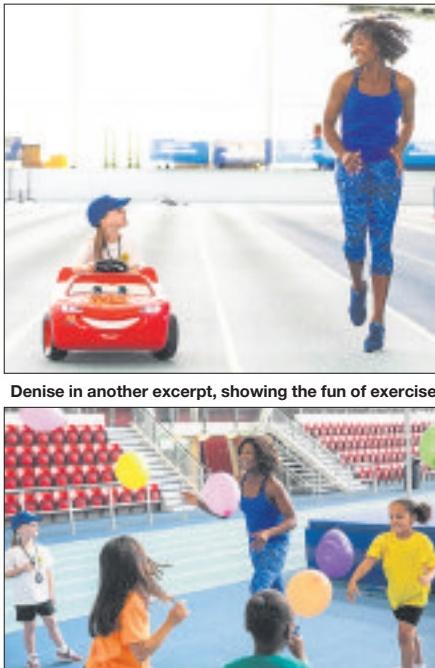
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Denise, who has joined forces with Change4Life, Sport England and Disney



Denise says exercise should be fun, with balloons a must



Denise with some of the youngsters in the 10 Minute Shake Up videos



Denise Lewis competing in the Women's Heptathlon 100m Hurdles at the Olympic Stadium in Athens in 2004

Denise on track to shake up exercise for children

AFTER helping present the BBC coverage of the World Athletics Championships, former heptathlete, the Black Country's own Denise Lewis has turned her attention to something even more important – getting the nation's children active.

The Olympic gold medallist, who grew up in Pendeford, Wolverhampton, has joined forces with Change4Life, Sport England and Disney to encourage kids to try 10 Minute Shake Up, a series of 10-minute games and activities to help them work towards the 60 minutes of physical activity it's recommended children do every day.

Just 23 per cent of boys and 20 per cent of girls meet this recommended activity target, and one in five children starts primary school overweight or obese, rising to more than a third by the time they leave.

Physical

The West Bromwich-born mum-of-three, who won heptathlon gold at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, says: "Being active isn't just for Olympians, it's something that everyone – no matter their age, ability or interests – can and should take part in."

"It's alarming so few boys and girls are hitting their physical activity target, so we want to kickstart children into being more active. The focus is running, jumping, throwing, catching and co-ordination – the basics, hence why I got involved, as obviously those are things I know very well."

Kids are more likely to be active if their parents are.

SPORTING FEATURE

By Lisa O'Brien

As a mum, I know how important being a role model is to keeping my family active and healthy

The 10 Minute Shake Ups offer fun activities inspired by an array of Disney characters. "The activities are very simple and the whole family can get moving together," explains Denise, aged 44.

Denise tries the Shake Ups herself in a short video in which she's coached mercilessly by a seven-year-old girl. "The kids in the video wore me out," says the sporty mum, who has a daughter aged 15 and two boys, aged eight and 11.

"As a mum, I know how important being a role model is to keeping my family active and healthy. Right from the get-go with my children they've seen me going for a run, being part of athletics, doing circuits, and it's almost like osmosis. It's easier with a sporty parent, children will usually follow suit."

A survey by Public Health England and Disney found 57 per cent of children said they were more likely to be active if their parents were – although the main motivation for kids was having friends join in (53 per cent).

"Sporty parents will encourage their children to be active," says Denise.

"The real challenge is children who don't have

active parents – how do you get those guys involved as well?" Denise suggests the key is to make activity easy at first, hence the bite-size, 10-minute chunks parents can join in with; playing simple balloon games, for example.

"Just 10 minutes sounds do-able to anybody. You can fit it into your day and, if you're enjoying it, perhaps you'll build it up and before you know it the kids have hit the target of an hour a day. You realise that just getting the heart rate increased is doing everyone's bodies the world of good."

Activity also helps psychologically. The survey found being active made the majority of those aged five to 11 feel happier (79 per cent), more confident (72 per cent), and more sociable (74 per cent).

And while Denise admits it would be "fantastic" if the 10 Minute Shake-Ups put children on the path to becoming top athletes, that's not really what the programme's about.

"If we get an Olympian out of this, I would love it," she says, "but this is about the bigger picture of having exercise and activity as part of your lifestyle."

And 17 years after winning Olympic gold, activity is still very much part of Denise's life. She runs, cycles and does circuits and weight training. "I exercise now for that space in my mind – and also so I can maintain my jeans size," she admits. "I don't feel the pressure like I used to. It's about that time away from being a busy mum."

Denise is optimistic about British sport's future and thinks there's a plethora of talent coming through, particularly in women's sport.

"There are a lot of positive role models for young women, inspiring other women to want to get involved. That's a great antidote to the negative images I see, like the selfie girls my daughter's age take – it's all they seem to think about. Let's get them thinking about being active instead."

Windies test proves a big hit for Edgbaston

CATERING sales were the highest ever for a non-Ashes Test at Edgbaston as England beat the West Indies in three days. Warwickshire's ground hosted the first day/night Test in England recently.

Warwickshire County Cricket Club chief executive Neil Snowball praised the efforts of everyone involved. Edgbaston handled 70,000 spectators across the three days of play, recording sell-outs on the second and third day.

"One of the primary reasons for playing this Investec Test match in day/night conditions was to support England in preparation for this winter's Ashes. However, to become the first UK venue to stage such a fixture has been an honour and builds on our reputation for innovation."

"We also recognised the commercial opportunity and estimate that total ticket sales increased by 25 per cent as a result of the change in format and increased marketing. Hospitality sales were also ahead of forecast and our merchandise sales were up 30 per cent," said Mr Snowball.

New-look triathlon entry date revealed

ATHLETES looking to take part in next year's Staffordshire Ironman – saved thanks to a change of location – can soon register online.

The Ironman 70.3 event, which has been in the county since 2015, was left without a home after the Shugborough Estate, where the race was based, said it would no longer play host. Staffordshire County Council had said the event, which has previously attracted celebrity names such as chef Gordon Ramsay, would remain in the county but concerns were raised it might have to be scrapped if a home could not be found.

However, it has been revealed the race will be based in Stafford town centre, with the athlete village, expo, second transition area, run course and finish line all being based there. The move will see a change to the run with a second transition area located at Riverway and course will also consist of three laps in and around the town, finishing in Market Square.

The bike course will undergo some minor changes.

For more details visit www.ironman.com/staffordshire70.3.

City club marking its golden birthday

A HISTORIC sports and social club is celebrating its 50th anniversary next month. The Old Wulfrunians Club was originally established in 1917, when the original members met in rooms above Barclays Bank in Queen Square, Wolverhampton.

The group was eventually able to commission the building of a purpose-built new clubhouse on the sports ground owned by the club, which opened on September 1, 1967.

Fifty years on and the club is now home to cricket and football teams of all age groups, with a newly-formed snooker team.

The anniversary event, which will have a 1960s theme, will begin at 7.30pm. People are invited to bring along any photos or memorabilia relating to the club.

Club members would love to see as many old friends as possible to reminisce and celebrate. For more information, call 01902 761410 or visit www.oldwulfruniansclub.co.uk.

SPORTS DESK 01902 319531

Heading in the right direction

Rushall 1 Stourbridge 2

TWO headed goals in the opening 10 minutes from Leon Broadhurst helped Stourbridge to all three points in this hard-fought local derby in the Evo-Stik Premier.

Rushall will rue some slack defending for both goals and, despite enjoying a greater share of possession in the second half, they lacked any real penetration to break down the Glassboys' rearguard in front of 522 supporters at Dales Lane.

There was a home debut for new signing Andre Landell while the visitors fielded three former Olympic players in their line-up – Aris Christophorou, Jack Duggan and Aaron Forde.

Christophorou was booked in the first minute, for bringing down Stan Mugisha, but the visitors created the first opportunity when Josh Green's shot was wide.

However, a minute later the Glassboys were ahead when Leon Broadhurst headed home a corner – and moments later he repeated the feat with a carbon copy of the first goal.

Trialist

The early goals had put the visitors in control and another move down the left saw Walsall trialist Jordan Archer's shot blocked and then the striker drove another shot over the bar.

The home side began to get back into the game and two minutes before the break were awarded a lifeline when Danny Waldron turned the ball home following determined play from Mugisha.

At the interval, Dominic Dell was introduced into the action to replace Liam Lawrence and the substitute almost marked his arrival with a goal, but his 20-yard shot flew inches past the post. At the other end, Archer headed Murphy's cross wide and, as Rushall hit back, Waldron headed straight at Gould.

With 13 minutes remaining, the visitors almost made the game safe but Dan Crane pushed Danny O'Callaghan's header on to the bar.

The home side pressed for an equaliser but two headers from Zak Lilly were high and wide and shortly afterwards the final whistle went to signal the end of a closely-fought local derby.

Stourbridge 0 Marine 2

Stourbridge were left with that sinking feeling as the Merseysiders completely outplayed them in the first half, going in front after just 90 seconds.

Striker Danny Mitchley, who proved a constant threat, whipped in a low right-wing cross which Glassboys goalkeeper Matt Gould failed to hold and Marine's James Murray was on hand to ram home.

Stour striker Ryan Rowe rifled over after being set up by defender Paul McCone after 13 minutes following a rare sighting on Marine's goal, but it came as no surprise when the lead was increased on 38 minutes. Mitchley was again the architect, gliding too easily past defenders before his initial shot was blocked, but the ball fell kindly for Murray who made no mistake at the second attempt.

Halesowen ready for promotion push

A BUMPER weekend of Bank Holiday cricket saw Halesowen move smoothly into third place in Division Two with three games to play. They're now closing in on second-placed Pershore and the sides will meet on the last day of the season.

On Saturday Ed Kilbee (131), Hassan Qaumi (76) and Jamie Harris (49 not out) were chiefly responsible for Halesowen's 303 for four victory over Sutton, who crumbled to 140 all out, in response, as Mashraf Shazad took 4 for 34 and Eddie Rhodes took 3 for 43.

On Monday Wombourne took a beating as once again Kilbee (100) despatched the Wombourne at-

Cricket

tack to all parts as Halesowen won with 25 overs to spare chasing 153 thanks to Rhodes (4-32) and tight bowling from Richard Broker and spin twin Shazad.

Halesowen skipper Richard Brooker is well satisfied with the bank holiday weekend's work, saying: "We are handily placed and that's a good feeling."

"Win or lose, cricket is all about playing to a plan making sure the five bowlers know their jobs at key parts of the power plays and the batters bat

in long periods when the fielding restrictions are in play. We have done that and if we continue in that vein then we will have a chance of promotion in the last game, maybe even before, who knows?"

He added: "The most important part of this period is being consistent, calm and confident at critical points in the game and repeating it over and over."

"That is the hallmark of a good side and at the moment we seem to be doing that but I am sure there are still plenty of twists and turns to come."

Meanwhile the second team suffered two defeats at the hands of Hinckley and Wolverhampton.



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Bragoli sees red in right Royals clash

Halesowen Town 0 Sutton Coldfield 2

HALESOWEN TOWN slumped to a fifth defeat in six Evo-Stik Premier games after conceding goals at the start of each half in Monday's 2-0 defeat to visitors Sutton Coldfield Town.

The hosts made a dreadful start when Aaron Birch exposed their defensive frailty by smashing past goalkeeper Dan Platt down the centre in the second minute. It could have been worse for Yeltz but Nathaniel Kelly's header was cleared off the line from a sixth-minute Sutton corner.

As the game became more even, Luke Shearer's 20th-minute effort was hacked clear by the Royals' defence and Asa Charlton headed just wide after Lee Chilton floated over a free-kick two minutes later. Matters worsened for Halesowen when Danny Bragoli was shown a straight red card for a poor challenge on James Beresford on the stroke of half-time.

The Royals soon wrapped up the game with a second goal when substitute Niall Flint's shot was parried away by Platt into the path of Malachi Lavell-Moore, who was on hand to slot home in the 54th minute.

Zac Martin almost added a third goal but his shot on the turn hit the underside of the bar and Platt saved the day with a good 75th-minute block from Gurjit Singh after Kyle Morrison gave the ball away.

Roland Agbor and Shearer battled bravely up front for the 10-man Yeltz, but the hosts lacked the quality and confidence to cause any real danger. The result left Halesowen second-bottom of the Premier Division table.

Buxton 2 Halesowen Town 1

Halesowen saw their efforts go unrewarded after a battling display in Derbyshire. The visitors were up against it just four minutes into this Evo-Stik Premier encounter when the hosts opened the scoring, Curtis Morrison putting Buxton ahead.

The Yeltz were rocked on 21 minutes when skipper Asa Charlton had to be helped off after a clash of heads. Eight minutes later Liam Hardy made it 2-0 for the home side.

Halesowen were back in it on the stroke of half-time when Chilton's cross saw Buxton's Joe Maguire head into his own net. Agbor was unlucky not to bag an equaliser on 75 minutes when an overhead kick went over the bar.



Cradley's Tom Perry led from the front with a full 15-point maximum as his men delivered at Monmore

Joe Lawlor offered excellent backing and Conor Dwyer again proved a trump card at reserve. Victory was secured with three races remaining – so the dream lives on.

Cradley: Tom Perry 15, Joe Lawlor 13+1, Conor Dwyer 12+4, Connor Coles 9+1, Luke Harris 7+1, Lewis Whitmore 0, Richard Hall R/R.

Belle Vue: Jon Armstrong 12+2, Jack Smith 12, Andy Mellish 6+2, Luke Woodhull 4+1, Ben Woodhull 0, Rob Shuttleworth 0, Lee Payne R/R.

Meanwhile, red-hot Wolves turned up the heat on their play-off campaign with a 49-41 win over title rivals Belle Vue.

A bumper Monmore Green crowd basked in the sun as the Parrys International Wolves leapfrogged the Aces into second spot in the Premiership. Swindon remain well clear at the top, but team boss Peter Adams' men, who have now taken 19 points from their last seven league fixtures, will be delighted with their evening's work.

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Thursday, August 31, 2017

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Open Days: Thursday 14th and Tuesday 19th September and Thursday 5th October 2017 9.00am - 10.30am.

For more details please visit our website www.perryfieldshigh.sandwell.sch.uk



Perryfields High School

Specialist Maths and Computing College

Together we achieve excellence

Congratulations to Perryfields pupils and staff for their continued hard work and academic achievements in 2017.

Once again Perryfields has secured an excellent set of GCSE and A Level results this year maintaining our strong academic performance over recent years.

The secondary schools success is built on a foundation which includes good quality teaching, high standards of behaviour and excellent relationships between staff, pupils and parents.

Perryfields is oversubscribed again this year with full entry in all year groups and a rapidly developing Sixth Form.

95% of our Sixth Form leavers have secured a place at their chosen University. The others have gained jobs or apprenticeships. One student has joined the Royal Marines as an officer.



**OPEN
EVENING
Thursday
21st Sep
7pm-9pm**



Why choose Perryfields?

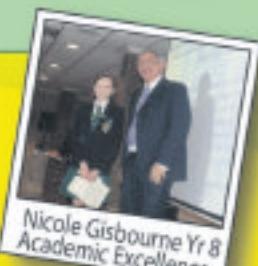
"Pupils' attitude to learning is overwhelmingly positive."



Mr Ian Barton

"I am proud and delighted to be appointed as the new Headteacher of Perryfields High School from September 2017. I am confident that we will continue to establish Perryfields as an outstanding learning environment for the 21st century. Look forward to continuing the school's high aspirations".

Mr I Barton, Headteacher



Nicole Gisbourne Yr 8
Academic Excellence



James Russell Yr 11
Duke of Edinburgh Award



Goonjan Kaur (Yr9) sharing her experiences of being a young carer.



"I like being a peer Mentor, people come out of the Green Room happy after a chat". Mia Lyman Yr 9



The Drama Department organise and perform several shows per year.



Introducing our new Head Boy Jack Lu (left) and Head Girl, Tom Murphy (right). Our new Head Girls are...
Head Girl: Tom Murphy
Head Boy: Jack Lu



Katie Johnson, Katie Matthieson, Cara Lynam, Lishma Johnson, Ellie Laslett and Niall Curtis.

Chair Challenge
Well done Niall Curtis for your winning innovative chair design for our Department competition.



"Perryfields High School shows it has excellent pastoral support on offer to pupils." The Children's Society

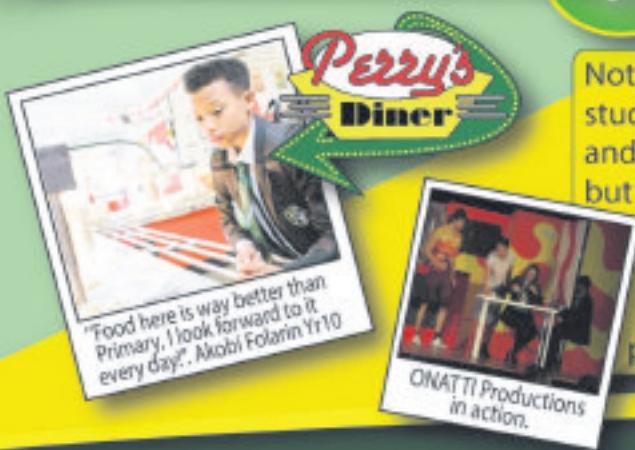


"We are one of the few Schools in the Midlands with the award".

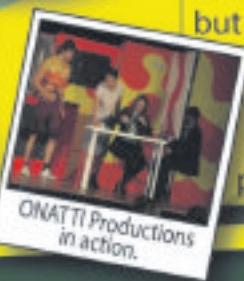


Geography Award

The Geography Department have recently been awarded the Secondary Geography Quality Mark from the Geographical Association.



"Food here is way better than Primary. I look forward to it every day". Akobi Folamny Yr 10



ONATTI Productions in action.

Not only did we have students studying French and Spanish GCSE this year, but we also had a number of students studying Chinese, Italian and Polish! A highlight for Year 9 students this year has been watching Spanish plays put on by ONATTI Productions.



"The behaviour of pupils is good" Ofsted

A performance fit for the Queen

A group of our very talented students performed as part of Sandwell's Youth Brass Band for the Queen in 2015.



"It was really cool playing for the Queen, even though it rained all day". Oliver Plotter



Our Newly curricular can push criteria and confident

Hearts & Minds

Our year 7 skipping event was an immense success and managed to raise over £1000 which has been spent on equipment.

Together we achieve excellence

is
positive"
Ofsted



Leadership Pyramid

introduced Leadership Pyramid recognises students and extra curricular efforts and involvement. Students themselves to a Leadership level through hitting specific and collecting all 3 badges. The leadership Pyramid builds well-rounded individuals ready for their futures.

Skipping a Beat

and 8 girls took part in a sponsored event during April '17. After an effort from all of the PE groups they to raise a whopping £1,616.75p which went to the British Heart Foundation.



A massive thank you to all who took part!



English

Literacy Co-ordinators

Our Literacy Co-ordinators support the English Department within

English and Literacy. They host reading groups with pupils who we are targeting for intervention and run competitions for all pupils to take part in. These pupils are also responsible for leading a 'pupil voice'.



The Dance department have had a very successful year, from dance shows and competitions to several performance visits. Perry's dance company were successful in reaching the regional finals for the 'Great Big Dance off'.



Our Key Stage 4 Dance Group at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre or the dance competition.

Art Success

The Art department won a national competition gaining a £1000 cash prize for their work celebrating diversity at Perryfields. More recently, Shai-Brienne Bedward and Charlie Major from Year 11 were successful in a local competition and had their artwork featured in a Sandwell calendar. They also received Kindles.



Jade Hall Yr11 Competition Entry.



Charlie Major Yr 11 Competition Winner.

Duke of Edinburgh

At Perryfields we offer the opportunity to be involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award from Year 9. We regularly have up to 50 participants taking part at Bronze Level and Silver.



"D of E is really fun. We have to set-up our tents and cook our own food". Sam Jennings Yr11

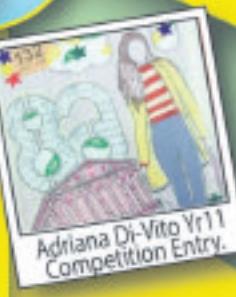


Long Hikes using only a map for direction.

The School promotes strong spiritual, moral and social values, including respect for people from different cultural backgrounds. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain". Ofsted



SHARP is an integrated system at Perryfields that is used by all staff to track behaviour and celebrate success. Challenges are often set and form groups compete to win prizes. Every term the forms with the highest amount of positive SHARP points from each family are rewarded with a Movie screening, pizza and a day in non-School uniform. There is also a prize draw for students who have not received any negative SHARP points to win a Samsung Galaxy tablet. Congratulations to our most recent SHARP winners for Christmas, Jagjeevan Mahal, Callum Williams, Harnak Channa and Amy Fairbrother, Ryan Williams and Thomas Charles for Easter.



Adriana Di-Vito Yr11 Competition Entry.

Some of our recent SHARP winners, Callum Williams Yr9, Ryan Williams Yr 7, Harnak Channa Yr8 and Aimee Fairbrother Yr 9.

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Thursday
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playing
through it
nowski



A-Level Art

Our last A-Level Art exhibition, Blood, Sweat and Tears was brilliant and showcased some of our strongest work to date. Students organised and hosted the exhibition and all who attended were astonished at the large canvases produced. Guests included, A level students, GCSE students, Parents and lecturers from local universities.



Once again our Year 11 prom was a success and all who attended had a fabulous evening. Both our young ladies and gentlemen dressed to impress in order to celebrate their achievements in style.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our Year 11 leavers and Mr Meredith the best of luck for their future endeavors.



Masie Miley, Amy Walford, Niamh Donnelly, Emma Chapman, Lauren Gordon and Katy Talboys (l. left to right)



Ensuring our students have fulfilling futures

"16-19 Careers advice is strong. The School makes good use of its links with local universities, and learners told inspectors that they felt very well supported in choosing their future destinations". Ofsted

Our mission is to equip every student with the skills and knowledge they need to lead successful and fulfilling lives when they leave us. After achieving excellent A-Level results at Perryfields, here is what a few of our students are doing now...



Joseph Barry-Shaw recently graduated with a 1st Class Honours in English (P.E.H.)



Bianca Morel recently graduated with a 1st Class Hons Degree in Biology (BSc).



Jordan Day recently graduated with a 1st Class Hons Degree in Computer Science (PGCE).



Evangeline Hadley is currently studying for a Degree in

Preparing for the next steps - Join us on Wednesday 27th September for taster lessons and fayre.

